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STUDIES IN MONTAIGNE

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STUDIES IN MONTAIGNE

BY

MISS GRACE NORTON

AUTHOR OF
"THE EARLY WRITINGS OF MONTAIGNE AND OTHER PAPERS"

"Il est un petit nombre d'écrivains qui ont un privilège: ils ont peint l'homme dans leurs œuvres, ou plutôt ils sont l'homme, l'humanité même, et comme elle ils deviennent un sujet inépuisable, éternal, d'observations et d'études. Tels sont et seront toujours Molière, La Fontaine, Montaigne."
Sainte-Beuve.

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PREFACE

This little volume offers itself only to the student of Montaigne. It has not much to interest the general reader. But it is my hope that the student may find some fresh light thrown on Montaigne's character and on his methods as a writer, in the first two papers, which deal with certain peculiar facts in the structure of the Essays, not before observed.

My aim in these two papers is to show that the Essay called the *'Apologie de Raimond Sebond,'* and that called *'De la Vanité,'* each consists in reality of two distinct essays; that the first consists of the *'Apologie'* proper and of a supplement—or more precisely an appendix—which has no direct relation to the work of Sebond, and seems to have been written some years later than the first part; while in like manner the essay entitled by its author *'De la Vanité'* may be clearly divided—though not so easily as in the other case—into an essay *'De la Vanité,'*

and another of which the title might be *'Des Voyages.'* In order that the reader may have the results of this division laid in full before him I have reprinted the original text of this Essay, with its two parts separated so as to present the two independent essays. As the reprint is made from the first edition of the Essay (1588) it is here given in a form unlike that in which it appears in modern editions, where additions interpolated in the posthumous edition of 1595 are incorporated in the text.

The difficulty in following the train of thought of the *'Apologie,'* occasioned by its diffuseness and inconsecutiveness, and the misunderstanding of its character that has existed, have induced me to make an abstract of its argument. I have also thought it worth while to draw attention to the interesting fact that many of Pascal's *'Pensées'* were not only suggested by the *'Apologie,'* but directly derived from it. This has not, to my knowledge, been previously exhibited to the English reader.

The facts here set forth in regard to the essay *'De la Vanité,'* naturally suggest the question whether similar conditions exist in other of the

Essays; especially in those of the Third Book, which, by far the most interesting and important portion of Montaigne's work, and later in date than the rest, differs greatly from the rest in its deeper tone of thought, and may also differ from the rest in this peculiarity of structure.

Sufficient evidence has not yet been collected to warrant more than questioning, but enough to suggest the desirableness of further investigation. If it should become in any degree apparent that Montaigne occasionally mixed up the pages of his later Essays, thus throwing his thoughts into a much more incoherent relation than that in which they originally presented themselves to his mind, the motives which induced him to so strange a procedure can only be guessed at.

In the essay *'De la Vanité'* he says: *"Puisque je ne puis arrester l'attention du lecteur par le pois,* manco male *s'il advient que je l'arreste par mon embrouilleure."* Is this a hint that the *"embrouilleure"* so frequently characteristic of his style was not unintentional? and may the greater *"embrouilleure"* in the structure of the Essays proceed from the same intention and have been purposed and carefully arranged?

Not fifty years after the Essayist's death the seigneur de Balzac wrote (what may perhaps be more true than he himself knew it to be):

"Son discours n'est pas un corps entier: c'est un corps en pièces: et quoique les parties soient proches les unes des autres, elles ne laissent pas d'estre separées. Non seulement il n'y a point de nerfs qui les joignent: il n'y a pas mesmes de cordes, ou d'aiguillettes, qui les attachent ensemble: tant cest autheur est ennemi de toute sorte de liaisons, soit de la nature, soit de l'art."

Montaigne himself said (in the essay *'De la Vanité*—a passage added in 1595): *"Mon livre . . . . n'est qu'une marqueterie mal jointe."*

Of the papers that follow in this volume the two already spoken of, that on the Inscriptions in Montaigne's Library is based on material that has not before been presented in full to the English reader. The paper which passes in review the books read by Montaigne brings together facts of which the interest is obvious, but which have not previously been collected.

Cambridge, Massachusetts,
October, 1904

BIBLIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

The reader may find it serviceable to be reminded of the dates and the character of the early editions of the Essays.

The 1st edition was published at Bordeaux in 1580, in two octavo volumes: it contained only the first two Books.

The 2nd edition, in one octavo volume, published at Bordeaux in 1582, was hardly more than a reprint of the first, though a few changes and additions were made.

The 3rd edition, one volume, 12mo., published in 1587 at Paris, has, again, no change of importance.

The 4th edition, a quarto, published in 1588 at Paris, is a very important one. It has been lately styled by M. Brunetière "*la vraie seconde edition.*" It contains the Third Book, and it was the last edition published during its author's life. It should be said, perhaps, that while no copy of any other edition than those mentioned above of an earlier date is known to have existed, this edition is announced on its title page as the *fifth* edition; and when its author was correcting a copy of it he wrote on the title-page '*Sixth edition*' in reference to the one he then contemplated. This is an unsolved bibliographical problem.

In 1595, three years after Montaigne's death, a folio edition was published at Paris, printed under the direction of the author's friend, the poet Pierre de Brach, and of his "*fille d'alliance,*" Mlle. de Gournay, with a preface by the latter. This has been, for the most part, simply reprinted in the eighty and more editions that have fol-

lowed. It was greatly enlarged from manuscript notes made by Montaigne on the wide margins of a copy of the 1588 edition (now in the Library at Bordeaux), and on loose leaves that have now disappeared. The manuscript notes were badly mutilated in the 17th century by a binder; and in consequence of the loss of the loose leaves, it is now impossible to authenticate a certain number of passages in the edition of 1595; and it is unquestionable that some passages on loose leaves may have been inserted in wrong connections. It is therefore unfortunate that this should have become the edition followed for the most part by later editors, and always by translators.[1]

In 1635, after some dozen or more intermediate editions, Mlle. de Gournay edited one in folio, dedicated to Cardinal Richelieu. This may be called unique, since she permitted herself in it to make occasional changes in the phraseology. She afterward regretted this course, but the changes are sometimes interesting as a commentary on Montaigne's thought by one who knew him well.

[1] Another edition of 1595 may be mentioned for its peculiar character. It is a 12mo published at Lyons before the Paris edition of the same date; and consequently based on the edition of 1588. The great bibliographical authority on Montaigne—Dr. Payen—pronounced it some years ago to be "unquestionably the worst edition ever published." He had not perceived that the many changes and omissions in it suggest that it is perhaps the work of Protestants. This curious fact was only, almost casually, pointed out, fifteen years ago, with no comment, in a posthumous Essay on the Texts of Montaigne, by a young scholar, Léon Manchon, of Laval. A copy of this rare edition is in the Library of Harvard College, and would, perhaps, repay a careful examination.

In 1802 Naigeon, the friend of Diderot, published an edition which purported to give with greater accuracy than Mlle. de Gournay had done the additions made in the Bordeaux copy ; but it is very inadequate.

In 1870 MM. Dezeimeris and Barckhausen reprinted with the utmost care the edition of 1580 (which is extremely rare) with the variants of 1582 and 1587. In 1886-1889 MM. Motheau and Jouaust reprinted carefully the edition of 1588 with the variants of 1595. These two reprints are indispensable to the student who has not access to the original editions.

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APOLOGIE DE RAIMOND SEBOND

"To Montaigne in the 'Apology' may be applied his own later reflection upon Socrates: 'Il m'est advis qu'en Platon et en Xenophon, Socrates dispute plus en faveur des disputants qu'en faveur de la dispute, et pour instruire Euthydemus et Protagoras de la cognaissance de leur impertinence, plus que de l'impertinence de leur art.' "

Miss Lowndes: *'Michel de Montaigne.'*

APOLOGIE DE RAIMOND SEBOND

Liv. II. ch. 12

This is by far the longest of Montaigne's Essays, and one of the most noted. It scarcely deserves the reputation it has gained either for ability or as an expression of irreligion, and the point of view which regards it as peculiarly, though obscurely, expressive of Montaigne's character is open to question. In a sense it is almost out of place in the collection of the Essays. It has the character of a comparatively early piece of writing, and while nominally an "apology" for a certain author, it is, in fact, the formless, diffuse outpouring of Montaigne's opinions on many philosophical and religious matters with which his mind was not particularly fitted to deal, and to which his attention seems to have been accidentally turned. It is thus of a different quality from all the other Essays. Its interest to a reader to-day lies almost solely in its characteristic sincerity and in the remarkably modern nature of some

of the opinions expressed in it—(also often characteristic of Montaigne's thought)—and in a few noble passages of religious feeling, which give proof of the deep foundations of Montaigne's morality. Its fate has been peculiar. It has been much misunderstood, greatly misrepresented and warmly argued against.

The first thinker of importance who declared himself as an opponent of the thoughts of Montaigne in this Essay and elsewhere was Pascal, who was so familiar with them that they had become blood of his blood and bone of his bone, and that he reproduces them when arguing against them.[1]

Pascal's opposition to Montaigne was, however, balanced by open admiration of him. But the associates of Pascal, the Port Royalists and their followers, echoing Pascal's cry of dismay at the absence in Montaigne of any religious emotion akin to their own high-strung consecration of their lives to asceticism and self-sacrifice, added to the note of dismay a note of indignant contempt,

[1] Sainte-Beuve remarked: "Les '*Pensées*' de Pascal, ne sont, à les bien prendre, que le chapitre de l' '*Apologie de Sebond*' refait avec prud'homie."

and uttered the epithet 'Atheist,' which was caught up and repeated generation after generation by those who did not themselves read Montaigne's writings, and knew him only by this deceptive hearsay.

Sixty years ago this report of him was renewed and affirmed by a man who it is strange should have seen him in this light, the admirable writer and thinker, Sainte-Beuve. When writing his great history of the Port Royalists, Sainte-Beuve —almost overmastered by the power of intellectual comprehension and moral sympathy that in later years obediently served him—looked at the world, as it were, through the windows of Port Royal, and through that distorting medium to see Montaigne truly or even distinctly was impossible; so that the vigour and ability with which Sainte-Beuve then depicted his figure served to present an image as incorrect as it was striking.

Afterward, the opinions of the eminent critic greatly changed; and though he never openly retracted his previous judgment, he showed so different an appreciation of the Essayist as to amount to a practical recantation of it. But the impression on the reading public of his earlier

assertions was not wholly corrected. Within the last few years, however, the defenders and admirers of Montaigne have been so numerous and so able that the legend of his irreligion and immorality is vanishing..

Emerson's designation of Montaigne, among his Representative Men, as the Sceptic, is likely to mislead those unfamiliar with the true sense of that word, but they will be set right by his definition of the character: "The ground occupied by the sceptic is the vestibule of the temple. Scepticism is the attitude assumed by the student in relation to the particulars which society adores, but which he sees to be reverend only in their tendency and spirit." This definition may be accepted as not inappropriate to the position of Montaigne.

In this Essay — the *'Apologie'* — which was considered by Sainte-Beuve as an arsenal of weapons forged to war upon Religion, collected and wielded by a hypocritical, friendly-seeming enemy, to other minds there appears strong evidence, strongly confirmed by other portions of his writings, that while Montaigne was far from being himself constantly guided by strictly religious

principles, he did not question their essential validity, and, possessing a simple devoutness and reverence of feeling, he sincerely believed in the authority of the Church. It is to be observed that the Church itself never took offence at this Essay. Immediately after the publication of the first edition of the Essays—in 1580—Montaigne went to Rome, and while he was there his book was censured; but censured only for his use of the word "Fortune," for his praises of the Emperor Julian, the Apostate, and for his admiration of the heretic Théodore de Bèze as a poet, and for other minor points. Nothing was said of the '*Apologie*' or of his opinions in general. And even these censures were soon withdrawn and the authorities assured him that "they honoured his intentions and his affection for the Church, and his ability."[1]

The Essay before us is connected with the fact that Montaigne had been induced to make a translation of the work of which he styles himself the apologist, by circumstances which he narrates in the opening pages of the essay. The book was

[1] The Essays were not put on the Index Librum Prohibitorum till 1676.

so warmly approved by his father that he begged Michel to translate it. No man—not even so affectionate a son as Montaigne—is likely to translate a volume of 1,000 solid pages merely to please his father; and it is fair to suppose that he also admired the book, and sympathized with the author's object, which, he says, was *"par raisons humaines et naturelles, d'establir et verifier contre les atheistes tous les articles de la religion chretienne."*

But the first clause of Montaigne's praise where he says: *"Sa fin est hardie et courageuse,"* may be reversed into a criticism, and one which is forced home to the reader of the *'Apologie'* far more distinctly than it was to Montaigne's own mind. The boldness of such attempts as that of Sebond appears nowadays as rashness; to Montaigne it seemed courageous only.[1]

[1] Bacon would have considered the aim of Sebond a chimerical one. See the *De Augmentis* (Spedding's edition Bacon's Works, Vol. IV. 341). And also this passage in the *Advancement of Learning* (2nd Book, xxv. 3): "Wherefore we conclude that sacred theology (which in our idiom we call divinity) is grounded only upon the word and oracle of God, and not upon the light of nature: for it is written, *Coeli enarrant gloriam Dei;* but it is not written *Coeli enarrant voluntatem Dei.*"

Montaigne was no logician, and consequently he was not perturbed by the immense assumptions with which Sebond starts, nor by the colossal leaps his argument makes in reaching his conclusions. But Montaigne was a competent judge of honesty of purpose, and the heartfelt piety of the book which the elder Montaigne had thought might make it a barrier against Lutheranism, inspired the translator with a respect that made him its apologist. But the whole situation was curious. It shows the perversity of even intelligent minds that Lutheranism should have been regarded as one with atheism; Sebond's argument, composed in the middle of the 15th century, was in reality not opposed to the Reformation, and, had it been so, its force was greatly diminished by his apologist in the heat of his sympathetic admiration for it.[1] The conditions are confused; it may be well to examine them in detail.

The two points that Montaigne felt called upon to answer in the objections made to the book were:

[1] Pascal, in his famous conversation with M. de Saci, points out that this defence of a work that proclaimed the sufficiency of human reason to prove divine things, became a long demonstration of the weakness of human reason.

1st: that Christian belief is conceived by faith, and cannot rest on reasoning but comes from Divine grace; and 2nd: that Sebond's arguments are feeble and easily overthrown.

These two points together, really, it may be seen, cover the whole contents of the volume, the value of which the translator had it at heart to maintain; but Montaigne was too unskilled a dialectician to perceive this, and believed himself to be concerned only with minor matters.

The first point (where he maintains that Christianity—or rather religious Truth—can be at least supported by Reason) becomes if one treats as synonymous, as he does, the terms Truth and Faith, the matter one would think most needed defence against its opponents. But Montaigne seems to have considered it the most easy of defence, or perhaps, we may believe he was less interested by the discussion of it than by that of the more personal question of his author's ability; for he devotes but thirteen pages to the first point, and eighty (nominally) to the second. But long before the last page one feels that he is not discussing but simply discoursing.

It is to be remarked that throughout this

Essay the corrections and additions in the later editions are not of a character that affect the thought.[1] Montaigne may have read it over, but he did not think it over much, after he had written it. It is one of the pieces of work the doing which lifts a man above his former self. When he ended it he was on a higher plane than when he began it; his point of view had become very different from that of Sebond. Changing the metaphor, his mind had run itself clear by the very process of expression; and it can easily be believed that he never cared to review his conclusions,—all the more, because they took no formal or formulated shape to him. He did not himself know—if, indeed, he cared to know—what he believed. Belief, or Faith, seemed to him above Reason, but none the less to rest on that; inspired from above, it could derive strength from below.

In his discussion of his first point, he lays less stress on the connection between Faith and Reason

[1] The author made considerable additions, in the way of illustration, before 1588; after that but few. It may be observed that here, as elsewhere, all the illustrations from Plato, with scarcely an exception, are additions—and often not judicious. Montaigne did not study Plato till after 1588;—and the note of the '*Apologie*' is not Platonic!

than he does on the irreligion of his fellow Christians, eloquently maintaining that irreligion is irreverence to God; and declaring that this irreligion is because "we" accept our religion only from worldly motives, not with faith, whereas the knot that should join us to our Creator should be a divine and supernatural bond.

Then he makes one of his odd 'turns' and goes on to say that not only our heart and soul but our brains should be at the service of our faith, and that if a man will but look around him he will find the structure of the world bears imprints of the hand of the great architect; and that if reasonings like those of Sebond be illuminated by faith, they are capable of serving as guides in the right path.[1]

[1] Cf. Bacon (*Advancement of Learning*, Book II. xxv. 3-4): "The doctrine of religion, as well moral as mystical, is not to be attained but by inspiration and revelation from God.—The use notwithstanding of reason in spiritual things, and the latitude thereof, is very great and general; for it is not for nothing that the apostle calleth religion 'our reasonable service of God;' . . . . The use of human reason in religion is of two sorts; the former, in the conception and apprehension of the mysteries of God to us revealed; the other in the inferring and deriving of doctrine and direction thereupon. . . ."

When Montaigne comes to the second point he seems to confuse somewhat those who declare the arguments of Sebond to be weak, with those who feel at liberty to fight against Christianity with merely human weapons; and he seems to think that he is answering the former as well as the latter (as indeed in one sense he is), by demonstrating the weakness of all human reason. And this is in truth the thesis of all the many following pages, in which it is set forth by every variety of illustration. Man, it is averred, has in his power no arguments stronger than those of Sebond; it is also averred that he can arrive at no certainty through reasoning. Montaigne does not perceive that this conclusion is fatal to Sebond's work.

The Essayist begins by considering man in himself alone, man deprived of Divine Grace, and in an impressive passage he depicts *"cette miserable et chetive creature,"* this quintessence of dust, and asks, Who has persuaded him that the glories of the universe, the mighty forces of nature which he can understand so little, and can command not at all, are for his sole advantage? At this early stage of the discussion Montaigne forsakes the

path of Sebond; carried away, it would seem, by the force of his own thought and the power of his expression;—for to his ironical questioning, Who has persuaded man that he is of such immense importance? the immediate, natural answer of the reader of Sebond would be: Sebond has at least done his best to prove that the whole creation is for the benefit of man.

Montaigne even passes here into a fantastic consideration of the powers of the heavenly bodies, and in view of their influences and their incorruptible life he questions why we do not attribute to them a reasonable soul.

He then enters on an argument (if it may be so called by courtesy), which extends over sixty pages, to prove that it is only man's presumption that makes him count himself the superior of other creatures. He supports, or thinks he supports, his opinions by all sorts of illogical deductions from the stories in Plutarch's Treatise on Water and Land Animals, in Pliny's Natural History, in Herodotus and other ancient authors. He is not to be blamed for not being wiser than his age on the matters he here treats of; but the fact that

he was not, deprives this part of the Essay of all interest, but that of curiosity, for the modern 'enlightened' reader.[1]

As he draws to the close of these anecdotes he remarks that while we attribute to ourselves imaginary advantages—future and absent advantages —and the fictitious advantages of reason, learning and honour, we recognize that beasts have the essential advantages of peace, security, innocence and health. We have for our share the mass of human weaknesses and passions. And of what avail is learning against our human miseries?

His thought now becoming deeper, Montaigne questions what gain there is in intellectual attainments. Learning (*"la science,"* philosophy) only by indirection brings us to the same ends that ignorance reaches directly, and ignorance is the more comfortable condition, witness the maladies caused and increased by the imagination, and the readiness with which the higher movements of the soul pass into madness.[2]

[1] See Appendix A. "The Credulity of Montaigne."

[2] "De quoy se fait la plus subtile folie, que de la plus subtile sagesse?"—Cf. Pascal: "L"extrême esprit est accusé de folie, comme l'extrême défaut. Rien que la médiocrité n'est bon. C'est la pluralité qui a établi cela, et qui mord qui-

The sovereign good is tranquillity; absence of ill, the best man can hope for, and to this *"la simplesse"* leads us, and learning itself throws us into the arms of ignorance by unavailing counsels of forgetfulness.

"La simplesse" renders life not only easier, but better; and knowledge is the root of evil; *"la simplicité* [est] *la meilleure sagasse."*[1] He here interpolates the consideration that from the inadequacy of our powers to conceive the heights of the Divine it comes to pass that those works of our Creator which most fully express his nature, are those which we least understand; and consequently an

conque s'en échappe par quelque bout que ce soit. Je ne m'y obstinerai pas, je consens bien qu'on m'y mette, et me refuse d'être au bas bout, non pas parce qu'il est bas, mais parce qu'il est bout; car je refuserais de même qu'on me mit au haut. C'est sortir de l'humanité que de sortir du milieu: la grandeur de l'âme humaine consiste à savoir s'y tenir; tant s'en faut que la grandeur soit à en sortir, qu'elle est à n'en point sortir." *Pensées:* ed. Havet (1866), T. I. p. 73.

[1] Cf. Erasmus, *Stultitiae Laus:* "Ut igitur inter mortales, ii longissime absunt a felicitate, qui sapientiae student, nimirum hoc ipso bis stulti, quod homines nati cum sint, tamen obliti conditionis suae Deorum immortalium vitam affectant, et Gigantum exemplo, disciplinarum machinis, naturae bellum inferunt, ita quam minime miseri videntur ii, qui ad brutorum ingenium stultitiamque quam proxime accedunt, neque quidquam ultra hominem moliuntur."

incredible thing is an occasion for belief: it is all the more according to reason as it is opposed to reason.[1]

This leads to an interesting and modern passage —an expression of agnosticism—*"c'est à Dieu seul de se cognoistre."*

Whatever knowledge we have of truth it is not by ourselves that we have acquired it; our faith is a pure gift, and it is through our ignorance more than our learning that we are wise with this divine wisdom.

Recurring to the comparison of learning with ignorance he declares that all the wisdom of the ages affirms the ignorance that is the wise child of learning. *"Le plus sage homme qui fut oncques, quand on luy demanda ce qu'il sçavoit, respondit, 'Qu'il sçavoit cela, qu'il ne sçavoit rien.'"*

All philosophers may be divided into three schools: those who think they have discovered the

[1] Cf. Pascal: "Qui blâmera donc les chrétiens de ne pouvoir rendre raison de leur créance, eux qui professent une religion dont ils ne peuvent rendre raison. Ils declarent, en l'exposant au monde, que c'est une sottise, *stultitiam* [I Corinthians i, 21] et puis vous vous plaignez de ce qu'il ne la prouvent pas. S'ils la prouvaient, ils ne tiendraient pas parole: c'est en manquant de preuve qu'ils ne manquent pas de sens." T. I. 149.

truth; those who think it cannot be discovered; those who are still looking for it. The peripaticians, epicureans, stoics and others—the dogmatists, the Aristotelians—have believed it found; the academicians and others have judged that it could not be attained by us; Pyrrho and other sceptics have persisted in the search, using doubt for their instrument of investigation. Nothing in human invention has contained so much truthfulness and usefulness. Even the dogmatists are forced at times to adopt pyrrhonism and to distrust learning. The academicians are sometimes "dogmatists," sometimes "doubters."

From this presentation of the schools of philosophy, Montaigne passes to the contemplation of the pleasure of study, even when vain, as useless knowledge is, and thence to the uselessness of the inventions of philosophers; or rather their vanity, since in the end truth must bend to the utility of action—to *"la loy civile."*

In the course of these remarks, Montaigne quotes *"un ancien,"* who, reproached for making profession of philosophy when in truth he did not hold it in great account, answered *"que cela c'etoit vrayment philosopher."* Pascal echoes

this phrase in a form that makes it applicable to Montaigne himself: *"Se moquer de la philosophie, c'est vraiment philosopher."*

He turns a little aside to consider the attitude of philosophers regarding religion: *"Platon dit tout destrousseement en sa Republique, que, pour le profit des hommes il est souvent besoin de les piper."*[1] But it appears to Montaigne that among the vain labors of the human understanding are the various conceptions of God; and he enters on a long enumeration of them, and reaches the conclusion that all other imaginations regarding the Divine nature are less to be censured than those which represent it as resembling our own. When —*"comme l'ancienneté"*—we make to ourselves gods like ourselves it is a marvellous madness. All his remarks on this subject are noble and interesting, and we have now reached a part of the Essay as interesting at one age of the world as another, since it is concerned with the unknowable.

Questioning whether philosophers of old could

[1] Pascal, in a *'Pensée'* wholly made up of reminiscences of Montaigne, setting forth the disadvantages of examining into the sources of established customs, remarks: "C'est pourquoi le plus sage des législateurs disait que, pour la bien des hommes, il faut souvent les piper." T. I. 39.

have been in earnest in what they said of their gods, Montaigne easily passes to the same question regarding what they said of the immortality awaiting us hereafter, and recognizes at the same time that it is one in philosophic character with Christian beliefs. The pages on the impossibility of the union of the human and the divine might have been written yesterday, to-day or to-morrow. Those who are in sympathy with them will always accept them; those whose minds have a different bent, will always reject them with a certain regretful disapproval.

A very striking passage is that where he questions by what right the gods can punish or reward man hereafter if his conduct here is caused by them. The discussion of Free Will was in the air, though the question was as old as Epicurus, and it is evident that Montaigne had forgotten the premise derived from Sebond that incomprehensibility is the sustaining atmosphere of faith.

Recurring to heathen beliefs he dwells on the strangeness of the fancy that divine benevolence can be pleased by our sufferings, and here as elsewhere one recognizes that in criticising ancient customs he criticises the religion of his own day.

Carried along on the wings of his subject from one mountain top to another, which makes it impossible to follow him closely by the footpath of logical sequence, Montaigne next flies to the point he has already touched upon, that because of the infinite difference between the Divine nature and human nature, we can have no knowledge of the conditions of the universe. We prescribe rules to nature though we know but a small portion of her operations, and even these rules of our making are infringed by many things we see and which we call miraculous. Rather we should call everything miraculous, since it is all beyond our comprehension.[1]

There is, he declares, much reckless irreverence in the definiteness of many religious phrases.[2] But

[1] "Tu ne veois que l'ordre et la police de ce petit caveau où tu es logé."—Cf. Pascal: "Que l'homme . . . . considère ce qu'il est au prix de ce qui est; qu'il se regarde comme égaré dans ce canton détourné de la nature, et que, de ce petit cachot [*i. e.*, d'après ce petit cachot] où il se trouve logé, j'entends l'univers, il apprenne à estimer la terre, les royaumes, les villes et soi-même son juste prix." T. I. p. 2.

[2] "Dieu ne peut faire cecy ou cela."—Cf. Sir Thomas Browne: "We do too narrowly define the power of God, restraining it to our capacities. I hold that God can do all things; how he should work certain contradictions I do not understand, yet dare not therefore deny. . . . I will not say

language is full of weakness and inadequacy and lends itself easily to falsity and incomprehensibility. This passage about language is but a long parenthesis, though an important one; and Montaigne recurs to the impossibility of our understanding God, and of the folly of considering him akin to ourselves. These pages are made very confused by the insertion of a long addition the close of which has no real connection with the text as originally printed. And there immediately follows a passage ten pages long, inserted in 1588, which very much cumbers the ground. It treats of ancient deifications, and the limitations of the powers of the gods and the consequent degradation of the idea of Divinity,[1] emphasizing again

God cannot, but he will not perform many things, which we plainly affirm he cannot; this I am sure is the mannerliest proposition, wherein notwithstanding, I hold no paradox. For strictly his power is the same with his will, and they both with all the rest do make but one God."—*Religio Medici.*

[1] "C'est pitié que nous nous pipons de nos propres singeries et inventions, comme les enfants qui s'effroyent de ce mesme visage qu'ils ont barbouillé et noircy à leur compaignon." Cf. Pascal, who diminishes the force of this image, by using it with regard to a gambler: "Il faut qu'il s'y échauffe et qu'il se pipe luy-même . . . . afin qu'il se forme un sujet de passion, et qu'il excite sur cela son désir, sa colère, sa

man's presumption in thinking that all things are for his sake[1] and the rashness of the human understanding.

This again is followed by an incongruous addition first made in 1595, after which the Essay reverts to its controlling thought—that of the insufficiency of learning. *"La philosophie n'est qu'une poësie sophistiquée"* and has created unreasonable complications in the study of nature and man.

At the best it is difficult to know ourselves. Have those who find the reasoning of Sebond

crainte, pour l'objet qu'il s'est formé, comme les enfants qui s'effraient du visage qu'ils ont barbouillé." T. I. 52.

Montaigne took this image from Seneca (Ep. 24), Pascal from Montaigne.

[1] "Pourquoi ne dira un oyson ainsi: Toutes les pieces de l'univers me regardent, la terre me sert à marcher, le soleil à m'esclairer . . . . je suis le mignon de nature. Est ce pas l'homme qui me traiste, qui me loge, qui me sert? c'est pour moy qu'il faict et semer et mouldre. . . . . Autant en diroit une grue; et plus magnifiquement encores, pour la liberté de son vol, et la possession de cette belle et haute region."

Cf. Pope (*Essay on Man*):

"Is thine alone the seed that strews the plain?
The birds of heaven shall vindicate their grain.

. . . . . .

While man exclaims, 'See all things for my use!'
'See man for mine,' replies a pampered goose."

weak, and who themselves know everything, have they never, busy with their books, discovered this difficulty?[1]

We receive ancient beliefs, and do not examine common opinions: pre-suppositions lead to mistakes; and philosophy fails to explain the perceptions of the senses.

Let us see if philosophy—reason—can tell us anything of the soul. No;—*Ignoratur enim, quae sit natura animai.*

In a digression on the vanity of philosophical enquiries in which he comments on "the man of

[1] In speaking of the way in which the mind moves the body he says: "La nature de la liaison et cousture de ces admirables ressorts, jamais homme ne l'a sceu. 'Omnia incerta ratione et in naturae majestate abdita,' dit Pline; et S. Augustin: 'Modus quo corporibus adhaeret spiritus omnino mirus est, nec comprehendi ab homine potest, et hoc ipse homo est.'"—Cf. Pascal: "Qui ne croirait à nous voir composer toutes choses d'esprit et de corps, que ce mélange-là nous serait bien compréhensible? C'est néanmoins la chose qu'on comprend le moins. L'homme est à lui-même le plus prodigieux objet de la nature: car il ne peut concevoir ce que c'est que corps, et encore moins ce que c'est qu'esprit, et moins qu'aucune chose comment un corps peut être uni avec un esprit. C'est là le comble de ses difficultés, et cependant c'est son propre être: 'Modus quo corporibus adhæret spiritus comprehendi ab hominibus non potest: et hoc tamen homo est.'" T. I. 8.

Plato," Montaigne refers to "the atoms" of the Epicureans, and classes the arguments regarding them as examples *"non d'arguments faux seulement mais ineptes."*

Returning to the philosophical study of the soul, after considerations regarding its preëxistence come those regarding its immortality. He remarks:

"Ils (les philosophes) ont ce dilemme tousjours en la bouche pour consoler nostre mortelle condition: 'Ou l'ame est mortelle ou immortelle: si mortelle elle sera sans peine; si immortelle, elle ira en amendant.' Ils ne touchent jamais l'autre branche: 'Quoy, si elle va en empirant?'"[1]

Reason it is evident cannot convince us of the immortality of the soul. But though reason is feeble, man is presumptuous, and Montaigne exclaims: *"Ce saint [St. Augustin] m'a faict grand plaisir: Ipsa utilitatis occultatio aut humilitatis exercitatio est aut elationis adtritio."*[2]

[1] Cf. Pascal: "Fausseté des philosophes qui ne discutaient pas l'immortalité de l'âme. Fausseté de leur dilemme dans Montaigne." T. I. 144.

[2] This is the reading of St. Augustine's text (*De Civ. Dei.* XI. 22), and the reading of Montaigne's text in the edition of 1595, when the passage was first printed. In Naigeon's edition (1802) (which purports to be a transcript of the Bordeaux ms. of the Essays) the quotation reads: Ipsa

Reason knows no more about the corporal than the spiritual part of man; philosophers cannot agree regarding human generation.

But if we know not ourselves, what can we know?

There here occurs a paragraph which it can hardly be questioned was, when the Essay was first shaped, its conclusion. It warns someone, individually addressed, against making use in the defence of Sebond of this *"dernier tour d'escrime"* which Montaigne has himself employed,—this assertion of the feebleness, the incompetency of human reason. *"Nous secouons icy les limites et dernieres clostures des sciences, ausquelles l'extremité est vicieuse, comme en la vertu."*[1]

veritatis occultatio, etc., and this reading is found also in Mlle. de Gournay's edition of 1635 and that of Henri Estienne of 1652, and is followed by Coste, Le Clerc and Louandre.

Cf. Pascal: "Il y a assez de lumière pour ceux qui ne desirent que de voir, et assez d'obscurité pour ceux qui ont une disposition contraire. Il y a assez de clarté pour éclairer les élus, et assez d'obscurité pour les humilier . . . . (Saint Augustin, Montaigne, Sebonde)." T. II. 48.

[1] This paragraph is of the nature of an *envoi*. An unquestioned tradition has existed for two hundred years and more that it was addressed to Marguerite de Valois, the wife of Henri IV. But there is no evidence in support of

The pages that follow this, though on allied subjects, form a complete and practically independent Essay, in which there is no allusion to Sebond, and of which the style has one marked difference from that of the preceding pages, in the constant recurrence of that personal note, which is so characteristic of Montaigne's usual writing, and which is entirely absent from what may be called the Apologie proper.

As the paragraph just commented on sounds like an *envoi,* so the next has the character of the opening of an Essay—also addressed to some person of high position—an Essay that might be entitled *'De l'insuffisance de nos propres moyens pour saisir la vérité,'* since it deals not only with the uncertainties of our reason, but also of our senses. That it was written at a different and a later time than what precedes it is suggested not only by the points already remarked upon, but by the fact that it goes over part of the same ground just traversed, and in a more characteristic manner. It is much more interesting and vigor-

this tradition and there is little likelihood of its truth. On the contrary, there is much reason to believe that the essay was presented to the sister of Henri IV., Catherine de Bourbon. See Appendix B, 'Catherine de Bourbon.'

ous than the previous pages, and is entirely free from the masses of untrustworthy and often almost puerile, borrowed matter that crowds and clogs those.[1]

There is ground for the supposition that the earlier portion of what constitutes the essay as it stands printed was written soon after Montaigne had published his translation of the work of Sebond, in 1569, in the height of its popularity;[2] the other shortly before the publication of the first edition of the Essays, in 1580.[3]

[1] A slight indication that one part was written at a different time from the other may, perhaps, be found in the fact that the reference to the opinions of Epicurus regarding laws, on the page before us, is almost a repetition of a passage a hundred and twenty pages earlier.

[2] In the '*Notice*' of Montaigne in the last volume of the last edition of the '*Essais*' (that of M. M. Courbet and Royer, 1900), M. Courbet asserts that Montaigne wrote the '*Apologie*' (impliedly all of it) at the same time that he was making the Translation; but he brings forward no proofs of this. The date of the '*Apologie*' has not heretofore been discussed.

[3] A curious piece of evidence confirms this hypothesis. Montaigne had inscribed on the beams of his Library 54 'mottoes;' and there is reason to believe that this was done about the year 1571. Of these inscriptions fourteen are quoted or referred to in the (so-to-call-it) first part of the '*Apologie*;' not one in the second part.

But another piece of evidence should, perhaps, be put into the other scale. Montaigne does not mention by name the

In support of this theory, that one piece of writing was added to another with which it had no vital connection, it is certain that on a lesser scale this was Montaigne's frequent practice, as may be observed by a comparison of the different editions. The very first Essay of all ended a page earlier in 1580 than in 1588. The eleventh was lengthened by two pages. The essay *"Que le goust des biens et des maux depend en bonne partie de l'opinion que nous en avons,"*[1] was enlarged by the insertion of ten solid pages, near the end, which are quite complete in themselves, being the account of the essayist's relations to money at different

Pyrrhonist philosopher, Sextus Empiricus, but the commentators have discovered that he makes use of his works some twenty times. Fourteen of these instances are in the *'Apologie,'* most of them in 1580; and they are equally divided between the two parts of the essay. It would seem strange that he should have had this author so much in his mind, with an interval of some years.

[1] This is the fourteenth chapter in 1580 and 1588; it was changed to the fortieth in 1595, which makes it difficult to refer to by its number (the case also, consequently, with the twenty-six following ones). It may be suggested that the cause of the editors making this change in the posthumous edition was the addition mentioned below, which made its place more suitable among the longer than the shorter Essays.

times of his life: his *'aisance'* and *'indigence'* depending on his own opinion. The forty-eighth chapter of the First Book has an 'appendix' of four pages, the twentieth of the Second Book is lengthened by one page, and many other similar facts might be pointed out.

If Montaigne made additions of this kind from one edition to another, it is not hard to believe that he treated his manuscript before printing it in the same way. This is, perhaps, the more likely, as he apparently wrote usually by dictation; and consequently might be more indifferent to the close connection of topics than if the pages were written by his own hand, and overlooked by his own eyes.

Returning to the Essay before us, we may compare for the quality of thought and style the page near the beginning of what one may call the later writing, where he speaks of the way in which *"nous recevons les arts,"* with that where in the earlier writing he speaks of the way in which *"nous recevons nostre religion."* It is almost a different hand, at least a perfectly different touch,—the difference of method between an unformed writer and a practised one.

This later part opens with taking up again the

question of the limits of human knowledge and with the assertion that if the soul (reason) knows neither itself nor its body it knows nothing with certainty; if we know any truth *"c'est par hazard."*

This is followed by a fresh account of the sects of the philosophers, the Academicians and the wiser Pyrrhonists. But soon we leave *"cette infinie confusion d'opinions qui se void entre les philosophes mesmes,"* and enter on the consideration of the uncertainty that every man perceives in himself. Truth is the direct gift of God; it cannot be conveyed from man to man.

It is certain that the faculties of the soul are affected by the conditions of the body, and the consequent inequalities of a man's state.

The state of the weather even changes our conditions, as says that verse in Cicero from the Greek:

> Tales sunt hominum mentes, quali pater ipse
> Juppiter auctifera lustravit lampade terras.[1]

The reason—*"c'est un instrument de plomb et*

[1] Cf. Pascal: *"Lustravit lampade terras.* Les temps et mes humeurs ont peu de liaison, j'ai mes brouillards et mon beau temps au dedans de moi." T. I. 84.

de cire, alongeable, ployable,"[1] and the weakness of the judgment is shown again by the power that mere assertion, even by oneself, has over one's mind.[2]

The fact that our passions often inspire noble actions beyond reason impels us to ask (Montaigne implies) if such actions in which our judgment has no part are more excellent than its dictates what advantage do we derive from the judgment?

The passion of love is a familiar example of the

[1] Cf. Pascal: "L'un dit que mon sentiment est fantaisie, l'autre que sa fantasie est sentiment. Il faudroit avoir une règle. La raison s'offre, mais elle est ployable à tous sens: et ainsi il n'y en a point." T. I. 98.

[2] Vous recitez simplement une cause à l'advocat . . . vous sentez qu'il luy est indifferent de prendre à soustenir l'un ou l'autre party. L'avez vous bien payé à mordre . . . . y a il eschauffé sa volonte? sa raison et sa science s'y eschauffent quant et quant; . . . . il y descouvre une toute nouvelle lumière, et le croit à bon escient."—Cf. Pascal: "L'affection ou la haine changent la justice de face; et combien un avocat bien payé par avance trouve-t-il plus juste le cause qu'il plaide! combien son geste hardi le fait-il paraître meilleur aux juges, dupés par cette apparence! Plaisante raison qu'un vent manie, et à tout sens!" T. I. 33. See again the *'Apologie,'* fifty pages later. "Vrayement il y a bien de quoy faire si grande feste de la fermeté de cette belle pièce [le jugement], qui se laisse manier . . au bransle . . d'un si legier vent."

intoxication of the judgment: and who shall say whether the lover or the same man when he is not in love sees things most truly?

These considerations have led Montaigne, he says, to be slow to embrace new opinions;[1] we have great reason to distrust them.

[1] "Le ciel et les estoilles ont branlé trois mille ans; tout le monde l'avait ainsi creu, jusques à ce qu'il y a environ 18 cens ans que quelqu'un s'avisa de maintenir que c'estoit la terre que se mouvoit; et, de nostre temps, Copernicus a si bien fondé cette doctrine qu'il s'en sert tres-regléement à toutes les consequences astrologiennes. Que prendrons nous de là, sinon qu'il n'y a guiere d'assurance ny en l'un en l'autre? et qui sçait qu'une tierce opinion, d'icy à mille ans, ne renverse les deux precedentes?

Cf. Bacon: (*Descriptio Globi Intellectualis*) ed. Spedding, Vol. V. 511. "Now it is easy to see, that both they who think the earth revolves, and they who hold the *primum mobile* and the old construction, are about equally and indifferently supported by the phenomena. Nay, and the author of the new construction in our own day, who made the sun the centre of the *secundum mobile,* as the earth of the *primum mobile,* whereby the planets in their proper revolutions would seem to wheel in dance round the sun (as some of the ancients suspected to be the case with Venus and Mercury), if he had thought the matter fairly out, might probably have brought it to a very good conclusion. Nor have I any doubt but that other similar constructions might by wit and severe thought be invented. Neither indeed do they who propose these theories mean to say that the things they allege are actually true, but only that they are conven-

"Je me tiens en l'assiette ou Dieu m'a mis. Ainsi me suis-je, par la grace de Dieu, conservé pur et entier sans agitation et trouble de conscience, aux anciennes creances de nostre religion, au travers de tant de sectes et de divisions que nostre siecle a produittes" (1588).

The truths of geometry, he goes on, subvert the truths of experience; but many things formerly held as truths of cosmography are on the other hand subverted by the truths of experience.

A long passage was here inserted in 1595, about the various opinions regarding the world, which confuses, as usual, the train of thought, all the more that it is inserted in a passage which very irrelevantly concerns itself with the idea of Epicurus that similar opinions to those that exist in this world exist also in other worlds. Montaigne thinks Epicurus would have been the more convinced of this had he seen the similarities of belief to be found in the New World with the Old; which he goes on to point out.[1] All this was written after the first publication of the Essay,

ient hypotheses for calculations and the constructions of tables."

Later (pp. 515-17) he questions what is the centre of the system of the universe, and says that "in the system of Copernicus there are found many and great inconveniences."

[1] "La circoncision . . . . la croix de Saint André . . . . l'inondation des eaux celestes."—Cf. Pascal: "Il ne serait

and before the (so-called) fifth edition, that is, between 1580 and 1588; and it has the least possible connection with the original current of thought of the Essay; thus confirming the impression that this latter part of the *'Apologie'* was more interesting to its author (as to its readers) than the former part, and more worked over by him.

After the interruption of this insertion we return to *"autres tesmoignages de nostre imbecillité;"* one of which is the variableness of man's desires; he himself had wanted the order of St. Michael.

Then after some questioning regarding the sovereign good of man, and the opinions of philosophers about it, a point *"duquel par le calcul de Varro nasquirent deux cents quatre vingt sectes,"* he remarks that from this diversity of opinion regarding the sovereign good, arises the universal confusion in customs and laws, and the

pas possible que les hommes se fussent imaginé tant de fausses religions, s'il n'y en avait un véritable. L'objection à cela, c'est que les sauvages ont une religion; mais on répond à cela que c'est qu'ils en ont oui parler, comme il paraît par le déluge, la circoncision, la croix de saint André, etc." T. II. 76.

most reasonable course *"c'est generalement à chacun d'obeir aux lois de son pays."* Yet what does this mean—save that duty has but a fortuitous rule?

"La verité doit avoir un visage pareil et universel. La droiture et la justice, si l'homme en connaissait qui eust corps et veritable essence, il ne l'atacheroit pas à la condition des coustumes de cette contrée ou de celle là; ce ne seroit pas de la fantaisie des Perses ou des Indes que la vertu prendroit sa forme."[1]

And he continues:

"Quelle bonté est-ce que je voyais hyer en credit et demain ne l'estre plus, et que le traject d'une rivière fait crime? Quelle verité est-ce que ces montagnes bornent, mensonge au monde qui se tient au delà?"[2]

We now come to a passage of considerable length about laws, one of the many interesting evidences in the Essays of how seriously Montaigne's mind had been given to the significance

[1] Cf. Pascal: "Certainement, s'il [l'homme] la connaissait [la justice], il n'aurait pas etablie cette maxime, la plus générale de toutes celles qui sont parmi les hommes, que chacun suive les moeurs de son pays: l'éclat de la véritable equité aurait assujetti tous les peuples, et les legislateurs n'auraient pas pris pour modèle, au lieu de cette justice constante les fantaisies et les caprices des Perses et Allemands." T. I. 37.

[2] Cf. Pascal: "Plaisante justice qu'une rivière borne! Verité au deçà des Pyrénées, erreur au delà." T. I. 38.

and the authority of human laws;—his attention, perhaps, having been specially directed to the subject by his avocations as *conseiller*. The consideration of the varyingness and changeableness of laws of nations leads him to that of the question of natural laws inherent in human nature, and to argue against their existence; at least against their present existence, even if man has been subjected to them in the past, as other creatures are now.[1]

"Il est croyable," he says, "qu'il y a quelques loix naturelles, comme il se voit és autres creatures; mais en nous elles sont perdues, cette belle raison humaine s'ingerant par tout de maistriser et commander, brouillant et con-

[1] "Ils sont plaisans quand pour donner quelque certitude aux loix, ils disent qu'il y en a aucunes formes, perpetuelles et immuables, qu'ils nomment naturelles, qui sont empreintes en l'humaine genre par la condition de leur propre essence. . . . . Or ils sont si defortunez . . . . que d'un nombre de loix si infiny il ne se rencontre point une que la fortune ait permis estre universellement receuë par le consentement de toutes les nations."—Cf. Pascal: "Ils confessent que la justice n'est pas dans ces coutumes, mais qu'elle réside dans les loix naturelles, connues en tout pays. Certainement ils la soutiendrait opiniâtrement, si la témérité du hazard qui a semé les loix humaines en avait rencontré au moins une qui fût universelle: mais la plaisanterie est telle, que le caprice des hommes s'est si bien diversifié qu'il n'y en a point." T. I. 38.

fondant le visage des choses selon sa vanité et inconstance; *'nihil itaque amplius nostrum est, quod nostrum dico, artis est.'* "[1] . . . .

"Une nation regarde un subjet par un visage, et s'arreste à celuy là; l'autre par un autre." [2]

After this he dwells on "the extreme confusion of judgments" arising in *"une science si infinie,"* and reaches the weighty and important conclusions that he thus expresses:

"Les loix prennent leur autorité de la possession et de

[1] Cf. Pascal: "Il y a sans doute des loix naturelles, mais cette belle raison corrompue a tout corrompu: *'Nihil amplius nostrum est; quod nostrum dicimus, artis est.'* Id. ib.

This citation is originally from Cicero (*De Fin.* V. 21); but it is evident that Pascal took it through Montaigne. And Montaigne (as pointed out by Havet) followed the reading of the editions prior to that of Manutius. The text now reads: *"Virtutem ipsam inchoavit (natura): nihil amplius. Itaque nostrum est (quod nostrum dico, artis est) ad ea principia, quae accepimus, consequentia exquirere,"* etc.

[2] "Il n'est rien si horrible à imaginer pue de manger son père. Les peuples qui avoyent anciennement cette coustume la prenoyent toutesfois pour tesmoignage de pieté et de bonne affection, cerchant par là à donner à leurs progeniteurs la plus digne et honorable sepulture."

Cf. Voltaire, *'Histoire de Jenni,'* T. 34, p. 381 (ed. Beuchot): "Le chef des montagnes nous demanda alors que nous fesions de nos ennemis lorsque nous les avions tué. Nous les enterrons, lui repondis-je. J'entends, dit-il, vous les faites manger par les vers. Nous voulons avoir la préférence: nos estomacs sont une sepulture plus honorable."

l'usage: il est dangereux de les ramener à leur naissance: elles grossissent et s'ennoblissent en roulant, comme nos rivieres; suyvez les contremont jusque à leur source, ce n'est qu'un petit surjon d'eau à peine reconnoissable, qui s'enorgueillit ainsin et se fortifie en vieillissant. Voyez les anciennes considerations qui ont donné le premier branle à ce fameux torrent, plein de dignité, d'horreur et de reverence; vous les trouverez si legeres et si delicates, que ces gens icy qui poisent tout et le ramenent à la raison . . . il n'est pas merveille s'ils ont leur jugements souvent tres-eloignez des jugements publiques.[1]

How familiar through life such thoughts were to Montaigne's mind is made evident by bringing into connection with this passage in this early essay, the following lines from the last of all the Essays:

"Or les loix se maintiennent en credit non par ce qu'elles sont justes, mais par ce qu'elles sont loix: c'est la fondement mystique de leur authorité, elles n'en ont poinct

[1] Cf. Pascal: "La coutume fait toute l'equité, par cette seule raison qu'elle est reçue: c'est le fondement mystique de son autorité. Qui la ramène à son principe l'aneantit. Rien n'est si fautif que ces lois qui redressent les fautes; qui leur obéit parce qu'elles sont justes, obéit à la justice qu'il imagine, mais non pas à l'essence de la loi: elle est toute ramassée en soi; elle est loi, et rien davantage. Qui voudra en examiner le motif le trouvera si faible et si leger, que s'il n'est accoutumé à contempler les prodiges de l'imagination humaine, il admirera qu'un siècle lui ait tant acquis de pompe et de révérence." T. I. 38-9.

d'autre. Et quiconque obeyt à la loy par ce qu'elle est juste, ne luy obeyt pas justement par où il doibt."

The next pages in the '*Apologie*' recur again to the confusion of judgments, and connect with this the fact that there may be a thousand interpretations of the same words; from which Montaigne slips, by way, again, of differences of judgments, into *"la consideration des sens,"* the concluding topic of the Essay.

He dwells first on his doubt whether man *"soit pourveu de tout sens naturels;"* and then on the recognized *"incertitude et faiblesse de nos sens,"* spite of which *"la force et l'effect des sens"* is all powerful.[1]

A passage added here in 1595, and another previously added in 1588 confuses the connection. But

[1] "Qu'on loge un philosophe dans une cage de menus filets de fer cler-semez, qui soit suspendue au haut des tours Nostre-Dame de Paris, il verra par raison evidante qu'il est impossible qu'il en tombe, et si ne se sçauroit garder (s'il n'a accoustumé le mestier des couvreurs) que la veuë de cette hauteur extreme ne l'espouvante et ne le transisse."—Cf. Pascal: "La plus grande philosophe du monde, sur une planche plus large qu'il ne faut, s'il y a au-dessous un précipice, quoique sa raison le convainque de sa sûreté, son imagination prevaudra. Plusieurs n'en sauraient soutenir la pensée sans pâlir et suer." T. I. 32.

"cette mesme piperie que les sens apportent à nostre entendement, ils le recoivent à leur tour; nostre ame par fois s'en revenche de mesme: ils mentent et se trompent à l'envy."[1]

In fine, we sleep when we wake, and wake when we sleep, "*Ceux qui ont apparié nostre vie à un songe ont eu de la raison à l'advanture plus qu'ils ne pensaient.*"[2]

He then suggests that there is probably great difference between our senses and those of animals; and that to judge of our senses we ought to know more about these differences and those that it is probable exist between different human beings; also it is to be noted that our different senses bear different testimony of the same objects. And who can judge of all these differences?[3]

[1] Cf. Pascal: "Ces deux principes de verités, la raison et les sens, outre qu'ils manquent chacun de sincerité, s'abusent réciproquement l'un l'autre. Les sens abusent la raison par de fausses apparences: et cette même piperie qu'ils apportent à la raison, ils la recoivent d'elle à leur tour; elle s'en revanche. Les passions de l'âme troublent les sens, et leur font des impressions fausses. Ils mentent et se trompent à l'envi." T. I. 45.

[2] Cf. Pascal: "La vie est un songe un peu moins inconstant." T. I. 42.

[3] The judge—"s'il est vieil, il ne peut juger du sentiment de la vieillesse, estant luy mesme partie en ce debat; s'il est jeune, de mesme; sain, de mesme; de mesme, malade, dor-

Though *"toute cognoissance s'achemine en nous par les sens,"* yet such is their uncertainty that it *"rend incertain tout ce qu'ils produisent. . . . et nous, et nostre jugement et toutes choses mortelles, vont coulant et roulant sans cesse."*[1]

In truth we have no communication with any constant existence (*"nous n'avons aucune communication à l'estre"*); and at the close of the Essay is a long quotation from Plutarch on the incessant progressive changes of Nature, one thing becoming always another, so that God alone is. Montaigne, as his last words, comments on the saying of Seneca: *"O la vile chose et abjecte, que*

mant, et veillant."—Cf. Pascal: "Si on est trop jeune on ne juge pas bien; trop vieil, de même. . . . Le veritable lieu [pour juger], la perspective l'assigne dans l'art de la peinture. Mais dans la vérité et dans la morale, qui l'assignera?" T. I. 31.

[1] Cf. Pascal: "Nous voguons sur un milieu vaste, toujours incertains et flottants, poussés d'un bout vers l'autre. Quelque terme où nous pensions nous attacher et nous affermir, il branle et nous quitte: et si nous le suivons il échappe à nos prises, nous glisse et fuit d'une fuite eternelle. Rien ne s'arrête pour nous. C'est l'état qui nous est naturel, et toutefois le plus contraire à notre inclination; nous brûlons de désir de trouver une assiette ferme et une derniere base constante, pour y édifier une tour qui s'élève à l'infini; mais tout notre fondement craque, et la terre s'ouvre jusqu'aux abîmes." T. I. 5.

l'homme, s'il ne s'esleve au dessus de l'humanite."[1] Man cannot of himself, says Montaigne, in effect, rise above himself and humanity, but he may be uplifted by the hand of God; —and it is Christian faith not stoical virtue that works this miracle.

Montaigne's remark: *"Tout abbrégé sur un bon livre est un sot abbrégé,"* is true, and the foregoing summary must lie under this judgment. But some justification for it exists in its declared purpose to attract attention to the different character of the first part of the Essay from that of the last third.

Yet to show this effectively is difficult, since the differences are not so much in the subject-matter, as in the treatment of it. The difference of treatment does indeed produce shades of difference in the subject, and it may be said that while the main topics in the first part are the nothingness of man, and his liability to essential error, and the insufficiency of learning, the point of view of the second part is of a more limited scope, and regards more

[1] "Unless above himself he can erect
Himself, how poor a thing is man."
Samuel Daniel (1582-1619).

definitely the uncertainty of human knowledge, whether derived from the action of the mind itself, or from the external senses.

In the one part a confused mass of testimony to the views put forward is poured out in a disorderly fashion, in the other the arrangement is more careful, and is more penetrated with the writer's own thought. In the earlier pages he dwells at length on the divers doctrines of many individuals among the ancient philosophers, finding a half-humorous satisfaction in pointing out the impotence of their metaphysical efforts, the vanity of their affirmations, their contradictions one of another; in the later pages he passes judgment calmly and not disrespectfully on the Pyrrhonists and Academicians, as schools, and treats the lesser thinkers with the indifference of silence. In the first part he dwells more on the character of our conceptions of our relations to God and Nature, in the second part, on the manner in which these conceptions are formed. In the one the rashness of the human understanding is treated of, in the other the diversity of human perceptions.

But the marked change of tone is felt when the

unbroken impersonality of the earlier pages is contrasted with the frequent personal expressions and personal confidences of the second part.

The first part is a sixteenth century Treatise, such as another scholar might have written; the second, an Essay by Montaigne.

APPENDIX A

THE CREDULITY OF MONTAIGNE

It is curious to observe the great confidence that Montaigne places in human testimony. There is, however, nothing contradictory in this to his general mental attitude of suspense of judgment, and it is fully explained in the Essay on the Folly of considering our Knowledge as a measure of the true and the false. It was a part of his perpetual *'Que sçais-je?'* which made it not difficult to him to look at the impossible as possible. To-day even, the limits for the impossible are very vague to untrained minds, and in Montaigne's day of scientific ignorance there can have been no fixed limits, to a thinker who like Montaigne had emancipated himself from dependence on the evidence of the senses, or on his personal experience. That he did not reject the inexplicable is never more apparent than in view of the credulity with which he listened to the voice of History. The degree of his belief varied not according to the character of

the facts but according to the character of the witnesses. Froissart and "our annals" did not seem to him witnesses of sufficient weight to control our judgment and to take from us freedom of question.—*"pour nous tenir en bride,"* but when Plutarch affirms as of his certain knowledge that a battle lost in Germany two hundred and fifty leagues from Rome was known of in Rome the same day, and when Caesar declares that an incident is often forerun by knowledge of it, "shall we say," asks Montaigne, "that these honest folk [*ces simples gents*] were deceived and were not as clear-sighted as we?" And when St. Augustine testifies to miracles seen by himself, and brings forward two holy bishops as also witnesses to them, "shall we accuse them," he asks again, "of ignorance, stupidity, carelessness, or of cunning and imposture? Is there any man of these days so impudently conceited as to think himself comparable to them in virtue and piety, or in learning, judgment and ability?"

He writes thus of Tacitus: "He may be thought bold in the statements he makes: as when he declares that a soldier bearing a load of wood had his hands so stiffened with cold and so glued to

his burden that they remained fastened there and dead, having separated from the arms. I am wont," says the great Doubter, "to bow before the authority of so weighty a witness."[1]

Montaigne's mind was balanced between credulity and scepticism. By nature he inclined, or was not always disinclined, to believe, by intelligence he learned to distrust. The contrast in this respect of his later thought with his earlier is marked in one of the last Essays, that entitled *'Des Boiteux;'* of which Voltaire said: *"Qui veut apprendre à douter doit lire ce chapitre de Montaigne, le moins méthodique des philosophes, mais le plus sage et le plus aimable."* Here Montaigne remarks that men are generally more ready to seek the cause of an alleged fact than to question its truth: *"Ils commencent ordinairement ainsi: 'Comment est ce que cela se faict?' 'Mais se faict il?' faudrait il dire."* He goes on:

"J'ay veu la naissance de plusieurs miracles de mon temps. Encore qu'ils s'estoufent en naissant, nous ne laissons pas de prevoir le train qu'ils eussent pris s'ils eussent vescu leur aage."

And speaking of sorcerers reported to be seen

[1] Essais: *L'Art de conferer.*

one day in the East and the next day in the West, —*"certes, je ne m'en croirais pas moymesme;"* it is much more likely that two men lie than that another flies like the wind.

But if we turn back to the early Essay already quoted from[1] we find him saying not less wisely, that it is foolish presumption but a common vice in those who think they have better brains than most, to judge that to be false which does not seem to them probable. "I used to be so minded," he says, "and if I heard talk of spirits returning to earth, or prognostications of future things or of enchantments, sorceries, or any like matters

> Somnia, terrores magicos, miracula, sagas,
> Nocturnos lemures, portentaque Thessala

I was full of compassion for the poor people deceived by such follies. And now I think that I was at least to be as much compassionated myself; not that experience has brought before me anything beyond my former beliefs . . . . but reason has taught me that to decide so positively that a thing is false and impossible, is to assume knowl-

[1] Essais: *C'est folie de rapporter le vray et le faux à nostre suffisance.*

edge of the boundaries and limits of the will of God and of the power of our mother Nature, and that there is no more notable foolishness in the world than to measure these by the capacity of our intelligence."

Bacon agreed with him. "Neither," says he, "am I of opinion in this history of marvels that superstitious narratives of sorceries, witchcrafts, charms, dreams, divinations and the like, where there is an assurance and clear evidence of the fact, should be altogether excluded. For it is not yet known in what cases, and how far, effects attributed to superstition, participate of natural causes."[1]

[1] See translation of the *De Augmentis*. Bacon's Works, Vol. IV. 296, ed. Spedding.

APPENDIX B

CATHERINE DE BOURBON

Catherine de Bourbon, the sister of Henri de Navarre, from the time of the death of her mother, Jeanne d'Albret, in Paris in 1572, when she was thirteen years old, remained at Court in the hands of Catherine de Medicis, the Queen, till 1576, when her brother (ten years older than herself) made his escape, and immediately sent to demand possession of her person. He established her at Nérac where he formed a little court, over which she presided. The *Mémoires* of the vicomte de Turenne (afterward the duc de Bouillon) the father of the famous Turenne, and those of Sully, contain many curious details of her life at this time. In 1577 Henri made Montaigne one of his 'Gentlemen of the Bed-Chamber,' and it is probable, though it is not certain, that in 1578 Montaigne was at Nérac. It was in these years that Duplessis-Mornay wrote for Catherine, and dedicated to her, his *'Méditations sur l'Evangile;'* and

there is no extravagance in the supposition that Montaigne may have taken from its resting place his *'Apologie,'* written perhaps some seven years before, and have presented it to her, possibly stretching the truth a little in saying that he had written it especially for her.[1] And we may go on to surmise that he at this time wrote the concluding pages also dedicated, so to speak, to Catherine by one personal paragraph near the beginning.[2] A further survey of the course of Catherine's life gives still more meaning to these personal passages, and also connects them with a somewhat similar passage in another essay.

In 1578 Marguerite de Valois, the wife of Henry, rejoined her husband, and for four or five years the sisters-in-law were together at Nérac, and the Queen of Navarre in her *Mémoires* celebrates the delights of their gay life there. Cath-

[1] As when he tells Mme. de Duras (Liv. II. 37): "Je ne veux tirer de ces escrits autre effait sinon qu'ils me representent à vostre memoire au naturel," and continues in the same strain of personal dedication.

[2] Another personal passage is a marked illustration of the "license" of those days. Montaigne quotes some extremely coarse lines from Martial, merely remarking in a parenthesis: "J'use en liberté de conscience de mon latin, avecq le congé que vous m'en avez donné."

erine had numerous *"prétendants."* Philip II. of Spain sought her hand, and the duke of Savoy, the grandson of Francis I.; her cousin Henri de Bourbon (Condé) was eager to marry her, and the old duke of Lorraine offered his crown; being refused, he proposed his son, whom, sixteen years later, Catherine, for her brother's sake, accepted. In 1583 her brother thought of James VI. of Scotland (the Ist of England) for her, and also of the prince de Dombes.

In 1584 the death of the duke of Anjou rendered the King of Navarre the legitimate heir of the crown of France, and his sister thus became *"la première de nos princesses."* It is therefore unquestionably to her that Montaigne refers in a passage near the beginning of the essay *'De Pedantisme,'* a sentence added in 1588, in which he quotes what *"une fille, la première de nos princesses"* had said to him. This compliment has also been laid at the feet of Marguerite de Valois, but from carelessness, as the terms had been inapplicable to her for sixteen years.

The princess of Navarre and Montaigne are likely to have had frequent opportunities for conversation. In 1585 he paid a visit at Nérac and

received a visit from the King of Navarre at Montaigne. The next year he made two visits to the King at Bergerac. In 1587 the battle of Coutras taking place on the 20th of October, the King passed the night of the 23rd at the château de Montaigne.

There are yet other reasons for supposing that Montaigne knew the princess well. In the so-called "war of the three Henrys," Catherine, as "*gouvernante et lieutenante-générale de Béarn,*" showed courage and great devotion to her brother. In the midst of the long-continued fightings and battles in 1587 Henri conceived the idea of her marriage to her cousin the brilliant comte de Soissons, the brother of Condé. She seems to have gladly listened to this proposal, all the more that the King of Scotland was now urging his claims, which would have brought a sad exile upon her. Her betrothal to the count took place and she gave her heart to him, but her brother from one motive or another constantly deferred the marriage. There were extraordinary *péripéties* in which "la belle Corisandre," a personal friend of the princess, was involved; and "la belle Corisandre"—Mme. de Grammont—was a per-

sonal friend also of Montaigne, and it seems not unlikely that through her he was more or less behind the scenes in these affairs. The poor princess's hopes of happiness came to an end by a mutual renunciation, in 1594, just before Henry's coronation.

She must have been for many years a conspicuous and admired person in the eyes of her brother's friends and followers, from whom his wife could never have won much favor; and, if now the passage which gives occasion to this note be looked at in detail it becomes apparent that the changes made in it in the different editions indicate changes in the position of the person addressed that tally with the changes in Catherine's circumstances.

The text of 1580 has a "tutorial tone befitting a man of forty-seven addressing a girl of twenty-one. In 1582 there is a slight indication of his recognition of more definite traits in her character. In 1588 the tone alters, she had become 'a personage'—*"la premiére de nos princesses."*

The text of 1580, written perhaps about 1577, is as follows:

"Vous, pour qui j'ay pris la peine d'estendre un si long

corps, contre ma coustume, ne refuyrez poinct de maintenir vostre Sebond par la forme ordinaire d'argumenter dequoy vous estes tous les jours instruite, et exercerez en cela vostre esprit et votre estude: car ce dernier tour d'escrime icy, il ne le faut employer que comme un extreme remede: c'est un coup desesperé, auquel il faut abandonner vos armes pour faire perdre à vostre adversaire les siennes: c'est un tour secret, duquel il se faut servir rarement et reservéement. C'est une grande temerité que de vous vouloir perdre vous mesmes pour perdre quant et quant autruy. Nous secouons icy les limites et dernieres clotures des sciences, ausquelles l'extremité est vitieuse, comme en la vertu. Je vous conseille, en vos opinions et en vos discours, autant qu'en vos mœurs et en toute autre chose, la moderation et l'attrempance, et la fuite de la nouvelleté et de l'estrangeté. Toutes les voyes extravagantes me faschent."

After a short digression, the 1580 text continues:

"C'est un dangereux glaive (l'esprit) à qui ne sçait s'en armer ordonnéement et discrettement. Parquoy il vous siera mieux de vous resserrer dans le train accoustumé, quel qu'il soit, que de jetter vostre jugement à cette liberté desreglée. Mais si quelqu'un de ces nouveaux docteurs entreprend de faire l'ingenieux en vostre presence, aux despens de son salut et du vostre, pour vous deffaire de cette dangereuse peste qui se respand tous les jours en vos cours,[1] ce préservatif, à l'extreme necessité, empeschera que la contagion de ce venin n'offencera ny vous ny vostre assistance."[2]

[1] The Courts of Nérac and of Pau.

[2] This is such bold language to an avowed Calvinist in Catherine's position that it implies relations with her of a

In 1582 after the sentence ending *"auxquelles l'extremité est vitieuse, comme en la vertu"*— there were added these words:

"Tenez vous dans la route commune, il ne faict mie bon estre si subtil et si fin. Souvienne vous de ce que dict le proverbe thoscan: *Chi troppo s'assottiglia si scavezza.* Je vous conseille, etc."

In 1582 this passage still ended with *"Toutes les voyes extravagantes me faschent."* But six years later—in 1588—these more respectful lines formed its conclusion:

"Vous qui, par l'authorité que vostre grandeur vous apporte, et encores plus par les avantages que vous donnent les qualitez plus vostres, pouvez d'un clin d'œil commander à qui il vous plaist, deviez donner cette charge à quelqu'un qui fist profession des lettres, qui vous eust bien autrement appuyé et enrichy cette fantasie, et qui se fust servy à faire son amas d'autres que de nostre Plutarque.[1] Toutesfois en voicy assez pour ce que vous avez à faire."

character that permitted Montaigne to express himself freely without fear of giving offence.

[1] "Nostre Plutarque." The phrase reminds one of the letter supposed by Sainte-Beuve to have been written by Henri IV to Marie de Medicis. Tamizey de Larroque has asserted that the letter was false, but has added "il a été fabriquée avec des phrases prises ça et là." (Revue critique, 26 Oct. 1885.) It may therefore be believed that the following remarks were uttered by Henri some time or other, and we may go farther and believe that they might have been

echoed by his sister: "Plutarque me sourit toujours d'une fraîche nouveauté; l'aimer c'est m'aimer, car il a été l'instituteur de mon bas âge. Ma bonne mère . . . . me mit ce livre entre les mains, encore que je ne fusse à peine plus un enfant de mamelle."

DE LA VANITÉ

"J'entends que le matiere se distingue soy mesmes: elle montre assez où elle se change, où elle conclud, où elle commence, où elle se reprend, sans l'entrelasser de paroles de liaison et de couture introduictes pour le service des oreilles foibles et nonchallantes, et sans me gloser moy mesme."

Montaigne.

DE LA VANITÉ

Liv. III. ch. 9

Montaigne has said: *"Qui est celuy qui n'ayme mieux n'estre pas leu que de l'estre en dormant ou en fuyant?"* And of no writer is it more true than of himself that the reader who gives time and thought to his pages, who becomes familiar with them, is rewarded by finding in them a far deeper wisdom than is perceived at first glance. The charm of style becomes subordinate to the charm of character; the book is endowed, as it were, with the personality of a friend, full of good counsel, at once serious and humorous.

And a hundred questions arise, both entertaining and instructive, before the eyes of a student of the Essays; some of them regarding human nature, in considering Montaigne's personal qualities; some of them regarding the modes of human expression, in considering his special method of presenting his thought.

Almost the most interesting of these questions are those that resolve themselves into a considera-

tion of Montaigne's individual manner; of the meaning not merely of his words, but of the way in which he develops his thoughts. That this has been greatly misunderstood is, perhaps, not surprising, since the study of other authors affords little aid in the study of Montaigne. Shakespeare, for example, was preceded and followed by kindred spirits; in a certain sense he belongs to a group, however much he towers above them. No spirit kindred to that of Montaigne is known in literature.

In studying some of Montaigne's Essays, questions about his manner present themselves that are unanswerable; that could only have been answered by himself; and perhaps not even by him. The reader may amuse himself with forming what hypotheses he pleases.

Some curious ones are suggested by his Essay on Vanity (so-called), the ninth of the third book. It has a marked irregularity of form, and as familiarity with it increases, two outlines, two forms, may be distinguished in it. Presently two different dates are found in it as being each the date of its writing; and gradually it seems to shape itself as two different essays; to one of

which belongs the title, *'De la Vanité,'* while that of the other might be *'Des Voyages.'*

The purpose of the present paper is to point out the curious interweaving of these two subjects.

The point of the dates may be taken first. On p. 132,[1] and again on p. 206, Montaigne refers to the death of his father, which took place in 1568, as having occurred eighteen years before the time when he was writing, which would make that time 1586; and on p. 137 he speaks of the death of Pibrac (1584) as recent. But on p. 150 he says: *"Je suis envielli de huit ans depuis mes premieres publications."* This would make the year 1588, as the first edition of the Essais was of 1580.

It is true that Montaigne was often inaccurate about his dates, indeed about all his personal statistics; and it may be said that perhaps this Essay was on the stocks for two years; but the facts we are coming to give a certain importance to the question of date.

Let us, now, begin to read the Essay. We go along quietly, with characteristic wanderings of thought, to p. 122. There, the sentence beginning

[1] The references are to the edition in 7 volumes published by Motheau & Jouaust in 1886-89.

"Parmy les conditions humaines" . . . . strikes an ear sensitive to Montaigne's style as having the mark of an 'opening' sentence, of introducing the reader to the subject to be treated. And, in fact, an entirely new subject is entered upon here; one that has no connection with "vanity"[1] (unless in a relation to be considered later), and no connection either with any of the previous, so to speak, accidental thoughts. On this page, and for twenty-four subsequent pages, the subject, pursued with unusual consecutiveness, is Montaigne's pleasure in travelling, and the causes of it, passing into considerations of the wretched conditions of France.

But on p. 146 there occurs again a complete break of connection of thought, with the words: *"Encores en ces ravasseries ici crains-je la trahison de ma memoire."* It would make the conditions we are examining somewhat less perplexed if this page joined well with the page (p. 122) where the previous break occurs. But in either case, whether it be considered with p. 122 or p. 146, the transition of thought is abrupt. The character

[1] It must be remembered that *"vanité"* is not our "vanity;" but "the vanity of vanities; all is vanity" of the Preacher.

and the subject of the thought is, however, somewhat more closely connected with the pages before p. 122 than with pages 123 to 146.

Let us now endeavor to disentangle the two intertwined lines of thought which, if kept apart, seem to form two separate Essays.

The character of the opening pages is such as to suggest that written as we have seen in 1588, the year of the publication of that edition of the Essays in which for the first time the Third Book was included, they were originally conceived almost as a Preface to that Book. The whole of the Essay to which would justly belong the title *'De la Vanité'* (as we shall circumscribe it) is almost entirely concerned with his own writings, and his conditions of mind, and indicates a somewhat depressed mood.

These opening pages express Montaigne's recognition of the endlessness of his subject and of its (apparent) triviality, and uselessness (to the State), leading on to the remark that *"escrivaillerie"* is one sign of a nation's decadence (p. 120).

But even worse than the folly of idle writing is his weakness, he says, in throwing everything to the dogs when matters go badly; a despairing

despondency which he expresses in one of those sentences of melancholy that, as the Saône with the Rhone, mingle with the large flow of his philosophy: *"Ce m'est faveur que la desolation de cet Estat se rencontre à la desolation de mon aage"* (p. 122).

If, after reading a few lines more, we skip to the passage on p. 146 we were just now considering, it does not seem strange that the thought of the "desolation" of his old age should remind him of the *"trahison"* of his memory, which he fears may be perceptible in these *"ravasseries."*

But however imperfect his *"ravasseries"* may be, *"laisse, lecteur, courir encore ce coup d'essay et ce troisiesme alongeail du reste des pieces de ma peinture"* (p. 149). These words seem again to have an introductory, prefacing note. He gives his reasons why he does not correct his writings (in essentials), but only adds to them, and (p. 151) he thanks *"les honnestes hommes,"* who have accepted his efforts with good will. Here we may perhaps find again a slight tone of depression.

On p. 152 the course of thought once more changes and runs on in a new channel to p. 177, where the sentence: *"Je sens ce proffit inesperé de*

la publication de mes meurs, qu'elle me sert aucunement (i. e. *un peu*) *de regle,"* and what follows, is still concerned with the Essays, Montaigne saying (p. 179) that beside the profit he has just spoken of, he had hoped in making himself known to the world for another profit, the happiness of finding a friend. (Still an undercurrent of sadness, of disappointment.)

Another 'skip' to p. 182, where Montaigne says: *"J'escris mon livre à peu d'hommes et à peu d'années. . . . .* " and this passage closes on p. 184 with a saddened sentence, to the effect that there will be no one by whom his memory will be cherished because of such affectionate and intimate knowledge as he had of his friend La Boétie.

The reader must now be asked to turn to the very last page and to read from the sentence *"Si les autres se regardoient attentivement comme je fay . . . .* " to the end.

And at the end he may, perhaps, feel that he has had before him a wholly natural and consistent piece of writing, which the Essay as it stands can scarcely be considered.

If he will now read the passages he has omitted he finds an equally simple and characteristic com-

position, markedly contrasted in tone with the one we have been considering; page after page of cheerful garrulousness and conversational philosophy,—about his love of traveling, and the ease with which he has indulged it, till his thought deepening, his voice strengthens and the most serious questions of public importance are discussed with admirable vigor of intellect. He continues by describing his own personal position in the midst of the national troubles, and this leads him to the deeply interesting, much criticised, reflections on death. He then passes back to his traveling inclinations, and takes up the complaints brought against him for leaving his family, and for running the risk of dying away from home. He philosophises seriously on these points, so seriously that it carries him into reflexions on the inconsistency between the moral laws men lay down and their general conduct, the discussion of which forms an immense parenthesis of eight or ten pages, from *"Je voy souvent qu'on nous propose des images de vie . . ."* (p. 193), to *"J'avois à dire que je veus mal à cette raison trouble feste"* (p. 205), where he comes back to the subject of the captious difficulties raised by his friends.

From here it is plain enough sailing to the end of this Essay (*Des Voyages*)[1] which closes with the sentence that follows the transcription of his "bulle."

The arrangement (here given as an Appendix) of the original Essay as first printed in 1588, divided into two parts—without the addition, omission or change of a single word[2] will save the reader the trouble of seeking out the various passages, and presents the matter as clearly as possible.

It was remarked on a previous page that a slight connection with "vanité" may be found in this 'other' Essay. The word and the thought occur on p. 143 of the following reprint of the Essay: *"Il y a de la vanité, dictes vous, en cet amusement; mais où non? Et ces beaux preceptes sont vanité, et vanité nostre sagesse."* And again on page 154 *"—je m'emploie à faire valoir la vanité mesme et la grosserie, si elle m'apporte du contentement."*

[1] The abruptness of the introduction of the passage about Rome, "J'ai veu ailleurs des maisons ruynées . . ." makes it seem like an interpolation.

[1] Except the words ["Ainsi en parloit] M. de Pibrac" after the citation from him, added from the text of 1595.

But these sentences are not sufficient to unite the disjointed parts.

It is very noticeable in these pages, and it may be a fact of importance for the matter under consideration, that in no Essay does Montaigne lay such stress on the necessity of careful and subtle attention on the part of his reader. In one passage (p. 151) he speaks of the mistakes that have occurred in the printing of the Essays:

"Ne te prens point à moy, lecteur, de fautes qui se coulent icy par la fantasie ou inadvertance d'autruy; chaque main, chaque ouvrier, y apporte les siennes . . . Où ils rompent du tout (*i. e.*, tout-à-fait) le sens, je m'en donne peu de peine, car aumoins ils me deschargent; mais où ils subsituent un faux, comme ils font si souvent, et me destournent à leur conception, ils me perdent. Toutesfois, quand la sentence n'est forte à ma mesure, un honeste homme la doit refuser pour mienne."

Another passage (p. 204) is still more noteworthy:

"J'entends que la matiere se distingue soy-mesmes: elle montre assez où elle se change, où elle conclud, où elle commence, où elle se reprend, sans l'entrelasser de paroles de liaison et de cousture introduictes pour le service des oreilles foibles et nonchallantes, et sans me gloser moy mesme. Qui est celuy qui n'ayme mieux n'estre pas leu que de l'estre en dormant ou en fuyant? Puisque je ne puis arrester l'attention du lecteur par le pois, *manco male* s'il advient que je l'arreste par mon embrouilleure.

'Voire mais, il se repentira aprés de s'y estre amusé.' C'est mon (*i. e.*, cela peut être vrai), mais il s'y sera tousjours amusé. Et puis il est des humeurs comme cela, à qui l'intelligence porte desdain, qui m'en estimeront mieux de ce qu'ils ne sçauront ce que je dis: ils conclurront la profondeur de mon sens par l'obscurité, laquelle, à parler en bon escient (*i. e.*, serieusement, plaisanterie à part) je hay, et l'eviterois si je me sçavois contrefaire."

Again on the preceding page (p. 203) he says:

"Je m'esgare, mais plustost par licence que par mesgarde: mes fantasies se suyvent, mais par fois c'est de loing, et se regardent, mais d'une veuë oblique. Les noms de mes chapitres n'en embrassent pas toujours la matiere. . . . J'ayme l'alleure poetique, à sauts et à gambades, et vois (vais) au change, indiscrettement et tumultuairement. Il faut avoir un peu de folie, qui ne veut avoir plus de sottise."

In the posthumous edition of 1595 there was interpolated before this last sentence a passage in which occurs this sentence:

"C'est l'indiligent lecteur qui perd mon subject, non pas moy; il s'en trouvera tousjours en un coing quelque mot qui ne laisse pas d'estre bastant quoy qu'il soit serré."

These passages—especially: *"Puisque je ne puis arrester l'attention du lecteur par le pois,* manco male *s'il advient que je l'arreste par mon embrouilleure,"*—suggest a surprising question.

May it not be believed that Montaigne purposely mingled and mixed these two Essays? that in a moment perhaps of *"une peu de folie,"* with a humorous desire to give, in an exaggerated form, what he recognized to be the characteristics of his style, he permitted himself these odd *"sauts et gambades"* back and forth, from one ground to another? In that case, it may be asked, why consider this as originally two Essays?

The answer, and to the present writer's mind, an irrefragable answer, is that they are *felt* to be two, not only from the difference of subject, but from the difference of *tone,* of mood. Not even Montaigne's versatility could make it possible to pass consecutively from one subject to another, especially in so long an Essay, and in the frequent changes preserve always the different qualities of thought and style here connected with each subject.[1]

A slight matter of style may be pointed out. In the (say) 380 lines that compose the shorter Essay, there are but two quotations; in the (say)

[1] It may be remembered in this connection that public affairs had assumed a much more alarming and depressing aspect in 1588 than in 1586.

1850 lines of the other there are forty-four; one, on an average, to every forty lines.

It is evident that Montaigne, after blending the two into one, increased the effect of unity by the passages which appeared first in the posthumous edition of 1595.[1]

The hypothesis here set forth—that we have before us two essays under the heading of one—finds support from the character of another Essay—the '*Apologie.*' In the preceding study of that Essay it has been pointed out that that also is apparently two Essays; two, not mingled together as in this case now examined, but one simply added to the other.

[1] It may be worth while to remind the reader that in the modern editions of the Essays, the additions made by Montaigne between 1588 and 1595, though they did not receive his last supervision or adjustment, are always incorporated in the text, often causing great unintelligibility by their lack of connection.

NOTE

Similar conditions to those pointed out in this paper may be traced in other of the Essays. The subject is worth further investigation. For instance:

Liv. III. 2.—*De la Diversion.*

About two-thirds of the way through, a new subject is presented beginning: "Nous ne regardons gueres les subjects en gros et seuls;" the pages that follow might be entitled: "Les ombres qui troublent l'âme."

Liv. III. 6.—*Des Coches.*

After some half dozen pages there come ten or more, complete in themselves (beginning "Marc Antoine") concerning 'les Despences des rois.' These are followed by thirteen pages, (to the end of the Essay) 'Du Nouveau Monde,' which begin with: "Quand tout ce qui est venu du passé. . . ."

Liv. III. 11.—*Des Boyteux.*

The first paragraph seems distinctly an incongruous fragment. The second begins an essay naturally and characteristically: "Je ravassois presentement . . ." but an essay of which the proper title would be 'De la cognoissance des causes,' or rather 'De nostre ignorance des causes.' The title the Essay bears belongs only to three or more pages at the end, beginning: "A propos ou hors de propos."

Liv. III. 5.—*Sur des vers de Vergile.*

The passage beginning: "Le maniement et emploitte des beaux espris donne pris à la langue" is quite evidently a separate piece of writing from the rest. There are ten pages in the middle: "De la suffisance des hommes élevés," that are entirely out of place.

Liv. III. 8.—*De l'art de conferer.*

The last five pages is a wholly separate and rounded criticism of Tacitus.

It is a noteworthy fact that the Essays here referred to are all in the Third Book:—as if Montaigne had gathered up his scraps for the edition of 1588, in which that book first appeared.

DE LA VANITÉ[1]

[1588]

Il n'en est à l'avanture aucune plus expresse que d'en escrire si vainement; ce que la Divinité nous en a si divinement exprimé, devroit estre soigneusement et continuellement medité par les gens d'entendement. Qui ne voit que j'ay pris une route par laquelle, sans cesse et sans travail, j'iray autant qu'il y aura d'ancre et de papier au monde. Je ne puis tenir registre de ma vie par mes actions, fortune les met trop bas; je le tiens par mes fantasies. Si ay-je veu un Gentilhomme qui ne communiquoit sa vie que par les operations de son ventre; vous voyiez chez luy, en montre, un ordre de bassins de sept ou huict jours; c'estoit son estude, ses discours; tout autre propos luy puoit. Ce sont icy, un peu plus civilement, des excremens d'un viel esprit; dur tantost, tantost lache, et tousjours indigeste. Et quand seray-je à bout de re-

[1] As seen by this reprint, the Essays were originally printed with no division into paragraphs, which renders less *visible* the inconsecutiveness of thought.

presenter une continuelle agitation et mutation de mes pensées, en quelque matiere qu'elles tombent, puisque Diomedes remplit six mille livres du seul subject de la grammaire? Que doit produire le babil, puisque le begaiement et desnouement de la langue estouffa le monde d'une si horrible charge de volumes? Tant de paroles, pour les paroles seules. O Pythagoras, que n'esconjuras-tu cette tempeste. On accusoit un Galba du temps passé, de ce qu'il vivoit oiseusement; il respondit, que chacun devoit rendre raison de ses actions, non pas de son sejour. Il se trompoit: car la justice a cognoissance et animadversion aussi sur ceux qui chaument. Mais il y devroit avoir quelque coërction des loix contre les escrivains ineptes et inutiles, comme il y a contre les vagabons et faineants; on banniroit des mains de nostre peuple et moy et cent autres. Ce n'est pas moquerie; l'escrivaillerie semble estre quelque simptome d'un siecle desbordé: quand escrivismes nous tant que depuis que nous sommes en trouble? quand les Romains tant que lors de leur ruyne? Outre ce, que l'affinement des esprits, ce n'en est pas l'assagissement en une police: cet embesoingnement oisif naist de ce que chacun se prent lachement à

l'office de sa vacation, et s'en desbauche. La corruption du siecle se faict par la contribution particuliere de chacun de nous; les uns y conferent la trahison, les autres l'injustice, l'irreligion, la tyrannie, l'avarice, la cruauté, selon qu'ils sont plus puissans; les plus foibles y apportent la sottise, la vanité, l'oisiveté; desquels je suis. Il semble que ce soit la saison des choses vaines, quand les dommageables nous pressent. En un temps où le meschamment faire est si commun, de ne faire que inutilement il est comme louable. Je me console que je seray des derniers sur qui il faudra mettre la main: ce pendant qu'on pourvoira aux plus pressans, j'auray loy de m'amender: car il me semble que ce seroit contre raison, de poursuyvre les menus inconvenients, quand les grands nous infestent. Et le medecin Philotinus, à un qui luy presentoit le doit à panser, auquel il recognoissoit au visage, et à l'haleine, un ulcere aux poulmons: "Mon amy, fit-il, ce n'est pas à cette heure le temps de t'amuser à tes ongles." Je vis pourtant, sur ce propos, il y a quelques années, qu'un personnage, duquel j'ay la memoire en recommendation singuliere, au milieu de nos grands maux (qu'il n'y avoit ny loy, ny justice, ny

magistrat qut fit son office, non plus qu'à cette heure), alla publier je ne sçay quelles reformations sur les habillements, la cuisine et la chicane. Ce sont amusoires dequoy on paist un peuple malmené, pour dire qu'on ne l'a pas du tout mis en oubly. Ces autres font de mesme qui s'arrestent à deffendre, à toute instance, des formes de parler, les dances et les jeux, à un peuple perdu de toute sorte de vices execrables. Il n'est pas temps de se laver et decrasser quand on est atteint d'une bonne fiévre. Quant à moy, j'ay cette autre pire coustume que, si j'ay un escarpin de travers je laisse encores de travers et ma chemise et ma cappe; je desdaigne de m'amender à demy: quand je suis en mauvais estat, je m'acharne au mal, je m'abandonne par desespoir, et me laisse aller vers la cheute; je m'obstine à l'empirement, et ne m'estime plus digne de mon soing: ou tout bien ou tout mal. Ce m'est faveur que la desolation de cet estat se rencontre à la desolation de mon aage; je souffre plus volontiers que mes maux en soient rechargez que si mes biens en eussent esté troublez. Les paroles que j'exprime au malheur sont paroles de despit; mon courage se herisse au lieu de s'applatir. Et au rebours des autres, je

me trouve plus devot en la bonne qu'en la mauvaise fortune; suyvant le precepte de Xenophon, si non suyvant sa raison. Et fais plus volontiers les doux yeux au ciel, pour le remercier que pour le requerir: j'ay plus de soing d'augmenter la santé quand elle me rit, que je n'ay de la remettre quand je l'ay escartée. Les prosperitez me servent de discipline et d'instruction, comme aux autres les adversitez et les verges. La bonne fortune m'est un singulier esguillon à la moderation, et modestie. La priere me gaigne, la menace me rebute. . . . . Encores en ces ravasseries icy crains-je la trahison de ma memoire, que, par inadvertance, elle m'aye faict en-registrer une chose deux fois. Je hay à me reconnoistre, et ne retaste jamais qu'envis ce qui m'est une fois eschappé. Or je n'apporte icy rien de nouvel apprentissage, ce sont imaginations communes; les ayant à l'avanture conceuës cent fois, j'ay peur de les avoir desjà enrollées. La redicte est par tout ennuyeuse, fut ce dans Homere: mais elle est ruineuse aux choses qui n'ont qu'une montre superficielle et passagiere. Je me desplais de l'inculcation, voire aux choses utiles, comme en Seneque. Ma memoire s'empire cruellement tous les jours,

Pocula Lethæos ut si ducentia somnos
Arente fauce traxerim.

Il faudra doresnavant, car Dieu mercy jusques à cette heure il n'en est pas advenu de faute, que, au lieu que les autres cerchent temps et occasion de penser à ce qu'ils ont à dire, je fuye à me preparer, de peur de m'attacher à quelque obligation de laquelle j'aye à despendre. L'estre tenu et obligé me fourvoie, et la despendre d'un si foible instrument qu'est ma memoire. Je ne lis jamais cette histoire que je ne m'en offence, d'un ressentiment propre et naturel : Lyncestez accusé de conjuration contre Alexandre, le jour qu'il fut mené en la presence de l'armée, suyvant la coustume, pour estre ouy en ses deffences, avoit en sa teste une harangue estudiée, de laquelle, tout hesitant et begayant, il prononça quelques paroles : comme il se troubloit de plus en plus, ce pendant qu'il luicte avec sa memoire, et qu'il la retaste, le voila chargé et tué à coups de pique, par les soldats qui luy estoient plus voisins, le tenant pour convaincu : son estonnement et son silence leur servit de confession. Ayant eu en prison tant de loisir de se preparer, ce n'est, à leur advis, plus la memoire qui luy manque, c'est la conscience qui luy bride la

langue, et luy oste la force. Vrayment c'est bien dict; on s'estonne du lieu, de l'assistance, de l'expectation, lors mesme qu'il n'y va que de l'ambition de bien dire; que peut-on faire quand c'est une harangue qui porte la vie en consequence. Pour moy, cela mesme que je sois lié à ce que j'ai à dire sert à m'en desprendre. Quand je me suis commis et assigné entierement à ma memoire, je pends si fort sur elle que je l'accable: elle s'effraye de sa charge. Autant que je m'en rapporte à elle, je me mets hors de moy, jusques à essaier ma contenance; et me suis veu quelque jour en peine de celer la servitude en laquelle j'estois entravé; là où mon dessein est de representer en parlant, une profonde nonchalance, et des mouvemens fortuites et impremeditez, comme naissans des occasions presentes; aymant aussi cher ne rien dire qui vaille, que de montrer estre venu premedité pour bien dire; chose messeante, sur tout à gens de ma profession. On a laissé par escrit de l'orateur Curio que, quand il proposoit la distribution des pieces de son oraison, en trois, ou en quatre, ou le nombre de ses arguments et raisons, il luy advenoit volontiers, ou d'en oublier quelque'un, ou d'y en adjouster un ou deux de plus. Je me suis

tousjours bien gardé de tomber en cet inconvenient, ayant hay ces promesses et prescriptions; non seulement pour la deffiance de ma memoire, mais aussi pour ce que cette forme retire trop à l'artiste. Baste, que je me suis meshuy promis de ne prendre plus la charge de parler en lieu de respect: car quant à parler en lisant son escript, outre ce qu'il est monstrueux, il est de grand desavantage à ceux qui par nature pouvoient quelque chose en l'action. Et de me jetter à la mercy de mon invention presente, encore moins; je l'ay lourde et trouble, qui ne sçauroit fournir à soudaines necessitez, et importantes. Laisse, lecteur, courir encore ce coup d'essay, et ce troisiesme alongeail, du reste des pieces de ma peinture. J'adjouste, mais je ne corrige pas: premierement, par ce que celuy qui a hypothecqué au monde son ouvrage, je trouve apparence qu'il n'y aye plus de droict: qu'il die, s'il peut, mieux ailleurs, et ne corrompe la besongne qu'il nous a venduë: de telles gens il ne faudroit rien acheter qu'aprés leur mort: qu'ils y pensent bien, avant que de se produire: qui les haste? Secondement, que, pour mon regard, je crains de perdre au change; mon entendement ne va pas tousjours avant, il va à

reculons par fois; je ne me deffie guiere moins de mes fantasies, pour estre secondes ou tierces que premieres: ou presentes que passées. Nous nous corrigeons aussi sottement souvent qu'aux autres. Je suis envieilly de huit ans depuis mes premieres publications: mais je fais doute que je sois amandé d'un pouce. La faveur publique m'a donné un peu plus de hardiesse que je n'esperois; mais ce que je crains le plus, c'est de saouler; j'aymerois mieux poindre que lasser, comme a faict un honneste homme de mon temps. La louange est tousjours plaisante, de qui et pourquoy qu'elle vienne: si faut il, pour s'en aggréer justement, estre informé de sa cause. Les imperfections mesme ont leur moyen de se recommander. L'estimation vulgaire et commune se voit, le plus souvent, peu heureuse en rencontre: et de mon temps, je suis trompé si les pires escrits ne sont ceux qui ont gaigné le dessus du vent populaire. Certes je rends graces à des honnestes hommes qui daignent prendre en bonne part mes foibles efforts. Il n'est lieu où les fautes de la façon paroissent tant, qu'en une matiere qui de soy n'a point de recommendation: ne te prens point à moy, Lecteur, de celles qui se coulent icy, par la

fantasie ou inadvertance d'autruy : chaque main, chaque ouvrier, y apporte les siennes. Je ne me mesle, ny d'ortografe (et ordonne seulement qu'ils suivent l'ancienne), ny de la punctuation : je suis peu expert en l'un et en l'autre. Où ils rompent du tout le sens, je m'en donne peu de peine, car au moins ils me deschargent ; mais où ils en substituent un faux, comme ils font si souvent, et me destournent à leur conception, ils me perdent. Toutesfois quand la sentence n'est forte à ma mesure, un honeste homme la doit refuser pour mienne. Qui connoistra combien je suis peu laborieux, combien je suis faict à ma mode, croira facilement que je redicterois plus volontiers encore autant d'essais que de m'assujettir à les resuivre, pour cette puerile correction. . . . . Je sens ce proffit inesperé de la publication de mes meurs, qu'elle me sert aucunement de regle : il me vient par fois quelque consideration de ne trahir ma peinture. Cette publique declaration m'oblige de me tenir en ma route, et à ne desmentir l'image de mes conditions, communéement moins desfigurées et contredites que ne porte la malignité et maladie des jugements d'aujourd'huy. L'uniformité et simplesse de mes meurs produict bien

un visage d'aisée interpretation; mais, parce que la façon en est un peu nouvelle, et hors d'usage, elle donne trop beau jeu à l'envie. Si est-il, qu'à qui me veut loyallement injurier, il me semble fournir bien suffisamment où mordre, en mes imperfections advouées et cogneuës, et dequoy s'y saouler, sans s'escarmoucher au vent. Si, pour en præoccuper moy-mesme l'accusation et la descouverte, il luy semble que je luy esdente sa morsure, c'est raison qu'il preigne son droict vers l'amplification et extension (l'offence a ses droicts outre la justice), et que les vices dequoy je luy montre des racines chez moy, il les estire en arbres : qu'il y emploie non seulement ceux qui me possedent, mais ceux aussi qui ne font que me menasser, injurieux vices et en qualité et en nombre; qu'il me batte par là. Tant y a, que tout conté, il me semble qu'aussi souvent on me louë qu'on me desprise outre mesure. Comme il me semble aussi que dés mon enfance, en rang et en degré d'honneur, on m'a donné lieu plustost au dessus qu'au dessoubs de ce qui m'appartient. Outre ce profit, que je tire d'escrire de moy, j'en espere cet autre, que, s'il advient que mes humeurs plaisent et accordent à quelque honneste homme,

avant que je meure il recerchera de nous joindre; je luy donne beaucoup de pays gaigné; car tout ce qu'une longue connoissance et familiarité luy pourroit avoir acquis en plusieurs années, il le voit en trois jours en ce registre, et plus seurement et exactement. Si, à si bonnes enseignes, je sçavois quelqu'un qui me fut propre, certes je l'irois trouver bien loing. Car la douceur d'une sortable et aggreable compaignie, ne se peut assez acheter, à mon gré. O un amy! Combien est vraye cette ancienne sentence, que l'usage en est plus necessaire, et plus doux que des elemens de l'eau et du feu. . . . . J'escris mon livre à peu d'hommes, et à peu d'années: si c'eut esté une matiere de durée, il l'eust fallu commettre à un langage plus ferme: selon la variation continuelle qui à suivy le nostre jusques à cette heure, qui peut esperer que sa forme presente soit en credit d'icy à cinquante ans: et pourtant ne crains-je poinct d'y inserer plusieurs articles privez, qui consument leur usage entres les hommes qui vivent aujourd'huy, et qui touchent la particuliere science d'aucuns, qui y verront plus avant que de la commune intelligence. Je ne veux pas, aprés tout, comme je vois souvent agiter la memoire des

trespassez, qu'on aille debattant: "Il jugeoit, il vivoit ainsin; il vouloit cecy; s'il eust parlé sur sa fin, il eust dict, il eust donné; je le connoissois mieux que tout autre." Or, autant que la bienseance me le permet, je fais icy sentir mes inclinations et affections; mais plus librement, et plus volontiers, le fais-je de bouche, à quiconque desire en estre informé. Tant y a qu'en ces memoires, si on y regarde, on trouvera que j'ay tout dict, ou tout designé; ce que je ne puis exprimer, je le montre au doigt:

> Verum animo satis hæc vestigia parva sagaci
> Sunt, per quæ possis cognoscere cætera tute.

Je ne laisse rien à desirer, et deviner de moy. Si on doibt s'en entretenir, je veus que ce soit veritablement et justement. Je reviendrois volontiers de l'autre monde pour démentir celuy qui me formeroit autre que je n'estois, fut ce pour m'honorer. Des vivans mesme, je sens qu'on parle tousjours autrement qu'ils ne sont. Et si, à toute force, je n'eusse maintenu un amy que j'ay perdu, on me l'eust deschiré en mille contraires visages. Je sçay bien que je ne lairray aprés moy aucun respondant, si affectionné de bien loing, et entendu en mon faict, comme j'ay esté au sien, n'y personne

à qui je vousisse pleinement compromettre de ma peinture; luy seul jouyssoit de ma vraye image, et l'emporta. C'est pourquoy je me deschiffre moy-mesme, si curieusement. . . . Si les autres se regardoient attentivement, comme je fay, ils se trouveroient comme je fay, pleins d'inanité et de fadaise: de m'en deffaire je ne puis, sans me deffaire moy-mesmes; nous en sommes tous confits tant les uns que les autres: mais ceux qui le sentent en ont un peu meilleur compte: encore ne sçay-je. Cette opinion et usance commune, de regarder ailleurs qu'à nous, a bien pourveu à nostre affaire. C'est un objet plein de mescontentement; nous n'y voyons que misere et vanité. Pour ne nous desconforter, nature à rejetté bien à propos, l'action de nostre veuë au dehors: nous allons en avant à vau l'eau; mais de rebrousser vers nous nostre course, c'est un mouvement penible; la mer se brouille et s'empesche ainsi quand elle est repoussée à soy. Regardez, dict chacun, les mouvements du ciel, regardez au public, à la querelle de cestuy-là, au pouls d'un tel, au testament de cet autre; somme, regardez tousjours haut ou bas, où à costé, ou devant, ou derriere vous. C'estoit un commandement paradoxe que

nous faisoit anciennement ce Dieu à Delphes: regardez dans vous, reconnoissez vous, tenez vous à vous; vostre esprit, et vostre volonté qui se consomme ailleurs, ramenez la en soy-mesme; vous vous escoulez, vous vous respandez: appilez vous, soutenez vous: on vous trahit, on vous dissipe, on vous desrobe à vous. Voy tu pas que ce monde tient toutes ses veues contraintes au dedans, et ses yeux ouverts à se contempler soy-mesme? C'est tousjours vanité pour toy, dedans et dehors, mais elle est moins vanité, quand elle est moins estendue. Sauf toy, ô homme, disoit ce Dieu, chaque chose s'estudie la premiere, et a, selon son besoin, des limites à ses occupations et desirs. Il n'en est une seule si vuide et necessiteuse que toy, qui embrasses l'univers: tu es le scrutateur sans connoissance, le magistrat sans jurisdiction, et aprés tout, le badin de la farce.

DES VOYAGES

[1586]

Parmy les conditions humaines, cette-cy est assez commune, de nous plaire plus des choses estrangeres que des nostres, et d'aymer le remuement et le changement :

> Ipsa dies ideo nos grato perluit haustu,
> Quod permutatis hora recurrit equis.

J'en tiens ma part. Ceux qui suyvent l'autre extremité, de s'aggreer en eux-mesmes, d'estimer ce qu'ils possedent au dessus de tout le reste, et de ne reconnoistre aucune forme plus belle que celle qu'ils voyent, s'ils ne sont plus advisez que nous, ils sont à la verité plus heureux. Je n'envie poinct leur sagesse, mais ouy leur bonne fortune. Cette humeur avide des choses nouvelles et inconnues, ayde bien à nourrir en moy le desir de voyager, mais assez d'autres circonstances y conferent. Je me destourne volontiers du gouvernement de ma maison. Il y a quelque commodité à commander, fut ce dans une grange, et à

estre obey des siens, mais c'est un plaisir trop uniforme et languissant. Et puis il est par necessité meslé de plusieurs pensements fascheux. Tantost l'indigence et oppression de vostre peuple, tantost la querelle d'entre vos voisins, tantost l'usurpation qu'ils font sur vous, vous afflige.

> Aut verberatæ grandine vineæ,
> Fundusque mendax, arbore nunc aquas,
> Culpante, nunc torrentia agros,
> Sidera, nunc hyemes iniquas.

Et que à peine en six mois, envoiera Dieu une saison dequoy vostre receveur se contente bien à plain, et que si elle sert aux vignes, elle ne nuise aux prez,

> Aut nimiis torret fervoribus ætherius sol,
> Aut subiti perimunt imbres, gelidæque pruinæ,
> Flabraque ventorum violento turbine vexant.

Joinct le soulier neuf et bien formé, de cet homme de temps passé, qui vous blesse le pied. Et que l'estranger n'entend pas combien il vous couste, et combien vous prestez, à maintenir l'apparence de cet ordre qu'on voit en vostre famille, et qu'a l'avanture l'achetez vous trop cher. Je me suis pris tard au mesnage. Ceux que nature avoit faict naistre avant moy, m'en ont deschargé long temps. J'avois desjà pris un autre ply, plus selon

ma complexion. Toutesfois, de ce que j'en ay veu, c'est chose plus empeschante que difficile. Quiconque est capable d'autre chose, le sera bien aiséement de celle-là. Si je cherchois à m'enrichir, cette voye me sembleroit trop longue : j'eusse servy les Roys, trafique plus fertile que toute autre. Puis que je ne cherche qu'à passer, je le puis faire, Dieu mercy, sans grande attention. Au pis aller, courez tousjours par retranchement de despence devant la pauvreté. C'est à quoy je m'attends, et de me reformer avant qu'elle m'y force. J'ay estably en mon ame assez de degrez, à me passer de moins que ce que j'ay. Je dis, passer avec contentement. Mon vray besoing n'occupe pas si justement tout ce que j'ay que, sans venir au vif, fortune n'ait où mordre sur moy. Ma presence, toute ignorante et desdaigneuse qu'elle est, preste grande espaule à mes affaires domestiques : je m'y employe, mais despiteusement. Joinct, que j'ay cela chez moy que, pour brusler à part la chandelle par mon bout, l'autre bout ne se descharge de rien. Tant y a que le dommage qui vient de mon absence ne me semble point meriter, pendant que j'auray dequoy le porter, que je refuse d'accepter les occasions

qui se presentent de me distraire de cette assistance penible. Il y a tousjours quelque piece qui va de travers. Les negoces, tantost d'une maison tantost d'une autre, vous tirassent. Vous esclairez toutes choses de trop prés: vostre perspicacité vous nuit icy, comme si faict elle assez ailleurs. Je me desrobe aux occasions de me fascher, et me destourne de la connoissance des choses qui vont mal, et si ne puis tant faire qu'à toute heure je ne heurte chez moy en quelque rencontre qui me desplaise. Vaines pointures et honteuses, mais tousjours pointures. Les plus menus empeschemens sont les plus persans: et comme les petites lettres offencent et lassent plus les yeux, aussi nous piquent plus les petites affaires. A mesure que ces espines domestiques sont drues et desliées, elles nous mordent plus aigu, et sans menace, nous surprenant facilement à l'impourveu. Or nous monstre assez Homere, combien la surprise donne d'avantage, qui faict Ulisse pleurant de la mort de son chien, et ne pleurant point des pleurs de sa mere: le premier accident, tout legier qu'il estoit, l'emporta, d'autant qu'il en fut inopinéement assailly; il soustint le second, plus impetueux, parce qu'il y estoit preparé. Ce sont legieres occasions,

qui pourtant troublent la vie : c'est chose tendre que nostre vie, et aisée à blesser. Depuis que j'ay le visage tourné vers le chagrin, pour sotte cause qui m'y aye porté, j'irrite l'humeur de ce costé là, qui se nourrit aprés, et s'exaspere de son propre branle, attirant et emmoncellant une matiere sur autre, dequoy se paistre :

Stillicidi casus lapidem cavat :

ces continuelles goutieres m'enfoncent et m'ulcerent. Quand je considere mes affaires de loing, et en gros, je trouve, soit pour n'en avoir la memoire guere exacte, qu'ils sont allez jusques à cette heure en prosperant, outre mes contes et mes raisons. J'en retire, ce me semble, plus qu'il n'y en a ; leur bon heur me trahit. Mais suis-je au dedans de la besongne, voy-je marcher toutes ces parcelles,

Tum vero in curas animum diducimus omnes,

mille choses m'y donnent à desirer et craindre. De les abandonner du tout, il m'est tres-facile ; de m'y prendre sans m'en peiner, tres-difficile. C'est pitié, d'estre en lieu ou tout ce que vous voyez vous enbesongne et vous concerne. Et me semble jouyr plus gayement les plaisirs d'une maisons estran-

giere, et y apporter le goust plus libre et pur. Mon pere aymoit à bastir le lieu où il estoit nay: et en toute cette police d'affaires domestiques, j'ayme à me servir de son example et de ses reigles, et y attacheray mes successeurs autant que je pourray. Si je pouvois mieux pour luy, je le feroys. Je me glorifie que sa volonté s'exerce encores et agisse par moy. Jà à Dieu ne plaise que je laisse faillir entre mes mains aucune image de vie que je puisse rendre à un si bon pere. Ce que je me suis meslé chez moy d'achever quelque vieux pan de mur, et de renger quelque piece de bastiment mal dolé, ç'a esté certes plus regardant à son intention qu'à mon contentement. Car, quant à mon application particuliere, ny ce plaisir de bastir qu'on dict estre si attrayant, ny la chasse, ny les jardins, ny ces autres plaisirs de la vie retirée, ne me peuvent beaucoup amuser. C'est chose dequoy je me veux mal, comme de toutes autres opinions qui me sont incommodes. Je ne me soucie pas tant de les avoir vigoreuses et doctes, comme je me soucie de les avoir aisées et commodes à la vie. Ceux qui en m'oyant dire mon insuffisance aux occupations du mesnage, vont me soufflant aux oreilles que c'est desdain,

et que je laisse de sçavoir les instrumens du labourage, ses saisons, son ordre, comment on faict mes vins, comme on ente, et de sçavoir le nom et la forme des herbes et des fruicts, et l'aprest des viandes dequoy je vis, pour avoir à cueur quelque plus haute science, ils me font mourir. Ce n'est pas mespris, c'est sottise; et plustost bestise que gloire; je m'aimerois mieux bon escuyer, que bon logitien:

> Quin tu aliquid saltem potius, quorum indiget usus,
> Viminibus mollique paras detexere junco.

Or j'arreste bien chez moy le plus ordinairement, mais je voudrois m'y plaire plus qu'ailleurs.

> Sit meæ sedes utinam senectæ,
> Sit modus lasso maris, et viarum,
> Militiæque.

Je ne sçay si j'en viendray à bout. Je voudrois qu'au lieu de quelque autre piece de sa succession, mon pere m'eust resigné cette passionnée amour qu'en ses vieux ans il portoit à son mesnage. Il estoit bien heureux de ramener ses desirs à sa fortune, et de se sçavoir plaire de ce qu'il avoit. La philosophie politique aura bel accuser la bassesse et la sterilité de mon occupation, si j'en puis prendre le goust. Je suis de cet avis que la plus noble vocation et la

plus juste est de servir au publiq, et estre utile à beaucoup. Pour mon regard je m'en despars: partie par conscience, car par où je vois le pois qui touche telles vacations, je vois aussi le peu de moyen que j'ay d'y fournir; partie par poltronerie; je me contente de jouïr le monde, sans m'en empresser, de vivre une vie seulement excusable, et qui seulement ne poise ny à moy ny à autruy. Jamais homme ne se laissa aller plus plainement et plus lachement au soing et gouvernement d'un tiers que je fairois, si j'avois à qui. L'un de mes souhaits pour cette heure, ce seroit de trouver un gendre, qui sçeut appaster commodéement mes vieux ans, et les endormir. Entre les mains de qui je deposasse en toute souverainté la conduite et usage de mes biens; qu'il en fit ce que j'en fais, et gaignat sur moy ce que j'y gaigne: pourveu qu'il y apportat un courage vrayement reconnoissant et amy. Mais quoy, nous vivons en un monde où la loyauté des propres enfans est inconnue. Qui a la garde de ma bourse en voyage, il l'a pure et sans contrerole; aussi bien me tromperoit il en contant. Et si ce n'est un diable, je l'oblige à bien faire, par une si abandonnée confiance. La plus commune seureté que je

prens de mes gens, c'est la mesconnoissance: je ne presume les vices qu'aprés que je les ay veuz: et m'en fie plus aux jeunes, que j'estime moins gastez par mauvais example. J'oi plus volontiers dire, au bout de deux mois, que j'ay despandu quatre çens escus, que d'avoir les oreilles battues tous les soirs, de trois, cinq, sept. Si ay-je esté desrobé aussi peu que autre. Il est vray, que je preste un peu l'espaule à l'ignorance; je nourris à escient aucunement trouble et incertain la science de mon arjant; jusques à certaine mesure, je suis content d'en pouvoir doubter. Il faut laisser un peu de place à la desloyauté ou imprudance de vostre valet: s'il vous en reste en gros de quoy faire vostre effect, cet excez de la liberalité de la fortune laissez le un peu plus courre à sa mercy. O le vilein et sot estude, d'estudier son argent, se plaire à le manier et reconter: c'est par là, que l'avarice faict ses aproches. Depuis dixhuict ans que je gouverne des biens, je n'ay sçeu gaigner sur moy de voir ny tiltres ny mes principaux affaires, qui ont necessairement à passer par ma science et par mon soing. Ce n'est pas un mespris philosophique des choses transitoires et mondaines; je n'ay pas le goust si espuré,

et les prise pour le moins ce qu'elles valent; mais certes c'est faitardise et mollesse inexcusable et puerile. J'estoy, ce croi-je, plus propre à vivre de la fortune d'autruy, s'il se pouvoit sans obligation et sans servitude. Et si ne sçay à l'examiner de prés, si, selon mon humeur et mon sort, ce que j'ay à souffrir des affaires, et des serviteurs, et des domestiques, n'a point plus d'abjection, d'importunité, et d'aigreur que n'auroit la suitte d'un homme, nay plus grand que moy, qui me guidat un peu à mon aise. Crates fit pis, qui se jetta en la franchise de la pauvreté, pour se deffaire des indignitez et cures du mesnage. Cela ne ferois-je pas; je hay la pauvreté à pair de la douleur; mais ouy bien, changer cette sorte de vie, à une autre moins noble et moins affaireuse. Absent je me despouille de tous tels pensemens; et sentirois moins lors la ruyne d'une tour que je ne faicts, present, la cheute d'une ardoyse. Mon ame se démesle bien ayséement à part, mais en presence elle souffre, comme celle d'un vigneron. J'esleve assez mon courage à l'encontre des inconveniens; les yeux je ne puis.

Sensus, ô Superi sensus!

Je suis, chez moy, respondant de tout ce qui va

mal. Peu de maistres, je parle de ceux de moienne condition comme est la mienne, et, s'il en est, ils sont plus heureux, se peuvent tant reposer sur un second qu'il ne leur reste bonne part de la charge. Cela oste beaucoup du plaisir que je devrois prendre chez moy de la visitation et assemblée de mes amis. La plus inepte contenance et plus vile d'un gentilhomme en sa maison, c'est de le voir empesché de l'ordre de sa police, parler à l'oreille d'un valet, en menacer un autre des yeux. Elle doit couler insensiblement, et representer un train ordinaire. Et treuve laid qu'on entretienne ses hostes du traictment qu'on leur faict, autant à l'excuser qu'à la vanter. J'ayme l'ordre et la netteté,

Et cantharus et lanx,
Ostendunt mihi me,

au pris de l'abondance; et regarde chez moy exactement à la necessité, peu à la parade. Si un valet se bat chez autruy, si un plat se verse, vous n'en faites que rire: vous dormez ce pendant que monsieur renge avec son maistre d'hostel ses affaires pour vostre traitement du lendemain. Quand je voyage, je n'ay à penser qu'à moy, et à l'emploicte de mon argent; cela se dispose d'un

seul precepte. Il est requis trop de parties à amasser, je n'y entens rien; à despendre, je m'y entens un peu, et à donner jour à ma despence, qui est de vray son principal usage; mais je m'y attens trop ambitieusement, qui la rend inegalle et difforme, et en outre immoderée en l'un et l'autre visage. Si elle paroit, si elle sert, je m'y laisse indiscrettement aller; et me resserre autant indiscrettement si elle ne luit, et si elle ne me rit. Qui que ce soit, ou art ou nature, qui nous imprime cette condition de vivre par la relation à autruy, nous faict beaucoup plus de mal que bien. Nous nous defraudons de nos propres utilitez, pour former les apparences à l'opinion commune. Il ne nous chaut pas tant quel soit nostre estre en nous et en effaict, comme quel il soit en la cognoissance publique. Les biens mesmes de l'esprit, et la sagesse, nous semble sans fruict, si elle n'est jouie que de nous; si elle ne se produict à la veuë et approbation estrangere. Il y en a de qui l'or coulle à gros bouillons par des lieux sousterreins, imperceptiblement; d'autres l'estandent tout en lames et en feuille: si qu'aus uns les liars valent escuz, aux autres le rebours; le monde estimant l'emploite et la valeur selon la montre. Tout

soing curieus autour des richesses sent à l'avarice; leur dispensation mesme, et la liberalité trop ordonnée et artificielle; elles ne valent pas une advertance et sollicitude penible. Qui veut faire sa despence juste, la faict estroitte et contrainte. La garde ou l'emploite sont de soy choses indifferentes, et ne prennent couleur de bien ou de mal que selon l'application de nostre volonté. L'autre cause qui me convie à ces promenades, c'est la disconvenance aux meurs presentes de nostre estat: je me consolerois ayséement de cette corruption, pour le regard de l'interest publique,

> pejoraque sæcula ferri
> Temporibus, quorum sceleri non invenit ipsa
> Nomen, et a nullo posuit natura metallo,

mais pour le mien, non. J'en suis en particulier trop pressé. Car en mon voisinage, nous sommes tantost par la longue licence de ces guerres civiles, envieillis en une forme d'estat si desbordée,

> Quippe ubi fas versum atque nefas,

qu'à la verité c'est merveille qu'elle se puisse maintenir.

> Armati terram exercent, semperque recentes
> Convectare juvat prædas, et vivere rapto.

En fin je vois, par nostre exemple, que la societé

des hommes se tient et se coust, à quelque pris que ce soit: en quelque assiete qu'on les couche, ils s'appilent et se rengent en se remuant et s'entassant, comme des corps mal unis qu'on empoche sans ordre trouvent d'eux mesme la façon de s'accommoder, se joindre, et s'emplacer les uns parmy les autres, souvant mieux que l'art ne l'eust sçeu disposer. Le Roy Philippus fit un amas des plus mechans hommes et incorrigibles qu'il peut trouver, et les logea tous en une ville, qu'il leur fit bastir, qui en portoit le nom. J'estime qu'ils dressarent des vices mesme une contexture politique entre eux, et une commode et juste societé. Je vois, non une action, ou trois, ou cent, mais des meurs en usage commun et receu, si monstrueuses, en inhumanité sur tout et desloyauté, qui est pour moy la pire espece des vices, que je n'ay point le courage de les concevoir sans horreur, et les admire quasi autant que je les deteste. L'exercice de ces meschancetez insignes porte marque de vigueur et force d'ame autant que d'erreur et desreglement. La necessité compose les hommes et les assemble. Cette cousture fortuite se forme aprés en lois. Car il en a esté d'aussi farouches qu'aucune opinion humaine puisse enfanter, qui

toutesfois ont maintenu leurs corps, avec autant de santé et longueur de vie que celles de Platon et Aristote sçauroyent faire. Et certes toutes ces descriptions de police, feintes par art, se trouvent ridicules, et ineptes à mettre en practique. Ces grandes et longues altercations de la meilleur forme de societé, et des reigles plus commodes à nous attacher, sont altercations propres seulement à l'exercice de nostre esprit: comme il se trouve és arts plusieurs subjects qui ont leur essence en l'agitation et en la dispute, et n'ont aucune vie hors de là. Telle peinture de police seroit de mise en un nouveau monde, mais nous prenons les hommes obligez desjà, et formez à certaines coustumes. Nous ne les engendrons pas comme Pyrrha ou comme Cadmus. Par quelque moyen que nous ayons loy de les redresser, et renger de nouveau, nous ne pouvons guieres les tordre de leur ply accoustumé que nous ne rompons tout. On demandoit à Solon s'il avoit estably les meilleures loys qu'il avoit peu aux Atheniens: "Ouy bien, respondit-il, de celles qu'ils eussent receuës." Non par opinion, mais par verité, l'excellente et meilleure police est, à chacune nation, celle soubs laquelle elle s'est maintenuë. Sa forme et com-

modité essentielle despend de l'usage. Nous nous desplaisons volontiers de la condition presente: mais je tiens pourtant que d'aller desirant le commandement de peu en un estat populaire, ou en la monarchie une autre sorte de gouvernement, c'est vice et folie:

> Ayme l'estat tel que tu le vois estre;
> S'il est royal, ayme la royauté;
> S'il est de peu, ou bien communauté,
> Ayme l'aussi, car Dieu t'y a faict naistre.

[Ainsi en parloit] le bon monsieur de Pibrac, que nous venons de perdre, un esprit si gentil, les opinions si saines, les meurs si douces. Cette perte, et celle qu'en mesme temps nous avons faicte de monsieur de Foix, sont pertes importantes à nostre couronne. Je ne sçay s'il reste à la France de quoy substituer un autre coupple pareil à ces deux gascons, en syncerité et en suffisance, pour le conseil de nos Roys. C'estoyent ames diversement belles, et certes selon le siecle rares et belles, chacune en sa forme. Mais qui les avoit logées en ce siecle, si disconvenables et si disproportionnées à nostre corruption, et à nos tempestes? Rien ne presse un estat que l'innovation: le changement donne seul forme à l'injus-

tice, et à la tyrannie. Quand quelque piece se démanche, on peut l'estayer : on peut s'opposer à ce que l'alteration et corruption naturelle à toutes choses ne nous esloingne trop de nos commencemens et principes : mais d'entreprendre à refondre une si grande machine, et en changer les fondemens, c'est à faire à ceux, qui veulent amender les deffauts particuliers par une confusion universelle, et guarir les maladies par la mort. Le monde est inepte à se guarir : il est si impatient de ce qui le presse, qu'il ne vise qu'a s'en deffaire, sans regarder à quel pris. Nous voyons par mille exemples, qu'il se guarit ordinairement à ses despens : la descharge du mal present n'est pas guarison, s'il n'y a en general amendement de condition. Pour nous voir bien piteusement agitez, car que n'avons nous faict ?

> Eheu ! cicatricum et sceleris pudet,
> Fratrumque : quid nos dura refugimus
> Aetas ? quid intactum nefasti
> Liquimus ? unde manum juventus
> Metu Deorum continuit ? quibus
> Pepercit aris ?

je ne vay pas soudain me resolvant,

> ipsa si velit Salus
> Servare prorsus non potest hanc familiam :

nous ne sommes pas pourtant à l'avanture, à nostre dernier periode. La conservation des estats est chose qui vray-semblablement surpasse nostre intelligence. En toutes nos fortunes, nous nous comparons à ce qui est au dessus de nous, et regardons vers ceux qui sont mieux: mesurons nous à ce qui est au dessous; il n'en est point de si malotru, qui ne trouve mille exemples où se consoler. Et comme disoit Solon, qui dresseroit un tas de tous les maux ensemble, il n'est aucun qui ne choisit plustost de raporter avec soy les maux qu'il a, que de venir à division legitime, avec tous les autres hommes, de ce tas de maux, et en prendre sa quotte part. Nostre police se porte mal: il en a esté pourtant de plus malades sans mourir. Les dieux se jouent de nous à la pelote, et nous agitent à toutes mains, *enimvero Dii nos homines quasi pilas habent.* Les astres ont fatalement destiné l'estat de Romme pour patron de ce qu'ils peuvent en ce genre: il comprend en soy toutes les formes et avantures qui touchent un estat: tout ce que l'ordre y peut, et le trouble, et l'heur, et le malheur. Qui se doit desesperer de sa condition, voyant les secousses et mouvemens dequoy celuy-là fut agité et qu'il supporta? Si

l'estenduë de la domination est la santé d'un Estat (dequoy je ne suis aucunement d'advis), celuy-là ne fut jamais si sain que quand il fut le plus malade. La pire de ses formes luy fut la plus fortunée. A peine reconnoit-on l'image d'aucune police soubs les premiers Empereurs : c'est la plus horrible et espesse confusion qu'on puisse concevoir. Toutesfois il la supporta, et y dura, conservant non pas une monarchie resserrée en ses limites, mais tant de nations si diverses, si esloignées, si mal affectionnées, si desordonnéement commandées, et injustement conquises :

> nec gentibus ullis
> Commodat in populum, terræ pelagique potentem,
> Invidiam fortuna suam.

Tout ce qui branle ne tombe pas. La contexture d'un si grand corps tient à plus d'un clou. Il tient mesme par son antiquité : comme les vieux bastimens, ausquels l'aage à desrobé le pied, sans crouste et sans cyment, qui pourtant vivent et se soustiennent en leur propre poix,

> nec jam validis radicibus hærens,
> Pondere tuta suo est.

D'avantage, ce n'est pas bien procedé reconnoistre seulement le flanc et le fossé pour juger de la

seureté d'une place; il faut voir par où on y peut venir, en quel estat est l'assaillant. Peu de vaisseaux fondent de leur propre poix, et sans violence estrangere. Or tournons les yeux par tout, tout crolle autour de nous: en tous les grands estats, soit de Chrestienté, soit d'ailleurs, que nous cognoissons, regardez y, vous y trouverez une evidente menasse de changement et de ruyne:

> Et sua sunt illis incommoda, parque per omnes
> Tempestas.

Les astrologues ont beau jeu à nous advertir comme ils font, de grandes alterations, et mutations prochaines: leurs divinations sont presentes et palpables, il ne faut pas aller au ciel pour cela. Nous n'avons pas seulement à tirer consolation de cette societé universelle de mal et de menasse, mais encores quelque esperance pour la durée de nostre estat: d'autant que naturellement rien ne tombe là où tout tombe: la maladie universelle est la santé particuliere: la conformité est qualité ennemie à la dissolution. Pour moy, je n'en entre point au desespoir, et me semble y voir des routes à nous sauver:

> Deus hæc fortasse benigna,
> Reducet in sedem vice.

Qui sçait si Dieu voudra qu'il en advienne comme des corps qui se purgent, et remettent en meilleur estat, par longues et griefves maladies : lesquelles leur donnent une santé plus entiere et plus nette que celle qu'elles leur avoit osté. Ce qui me poise le plus, c'est qu'à compter les simptomes de nostre mal, j'en vois autant de naturels, et de ceux que le ciel nous envoye et proprement siens, que de ceux que nostre desreiglement et l'imprudence humaine conferent. . . . Je disois donc tantost qu'estant planté en la plus profonde miniere de ce nouveau metal, non seulement je suis privé de grande familiarité avec gens d'autre humeur et opinions que les miennes, et qui se tiennent d'un neud qui fuit à tout autre neud, mais encore je ne suis pas sans hazard parmy ceux à qui tout est egalement loisible, et desquels la plus part ne peut meshuy empirer son marché envers nostre justice, d'où naist l'extreme degré de licence. Contant toutes les particulieres circonstances qui me regardent, je ne trouve homme des nostres à qui la deffence des loix couste, et en guain cessant, et en dommage emergeant, disent les clercs, plus qu'à moy. Comme maison de tout temps libre, ouverte, et officieuse à chacun (car je ne me suis jamais

laissé induire d'en faire un outil de guerre offensive, à laquelle je me mesle plus volontiers où elle est le plus esloignée de mon voisinage), ma maison a merité assez d'affection populaire, et seroit bien malaisé de me gourmander sur mon fumier; et estime à un merveilleux chef-d'oeuvre, et exemplaire, qu'elle soit encore vierge de sang, et de sac, soubs un si long orage, tant de changemens et agitations voisines. Car, à dire vray, il estoit possible à un homme de ma complexion, d'eschaper à une forme constante, et continue, quelle qu'elle fut; mais les invasions et incursions contraires, et alternations et vicissitudes de la fortune, autour de moy, ont jusqu'à cette heure plus exasperé que amolly l'humeur du pays, et me rechargent de dangers, et difficultez invincibles. J'eschape, mais il me desplaist que ce soit plus par fortune, voire et par ma prudence, que par justice; et me desplaist d'estre hors la protection des loix, et soubs autre sauvegarde que la leur. Comme les choses sont, je vis plus qu'à demy de la faveur d'autruy, qui est une rude obligation. Je ne veux debvoir ma seureté, ny à la bonté et benignité des grands, qui s'aggreent de ma legalité et liberté, ny à la facilité des meurs de mes predecesseurs, et

miennes: car quoy si j'estois autre? Si mes deportemens et la franchise de ma conversation obligent mes voisins, ou la parenté, c'est cruauté qu'ils s'en puissent acquiter en me laissant vivre; et qu'ils puissent dire: "Nous luy condonnons sa maison, et sa vie, comme il conserve nos femmes et nos beufs au besoing." De longue main chez moy, nous avons part à la louange de Licurgus Athenien, qui estoit general depositaire et gardien des bourses de ses concitoyens. Or je tiens qu'il faut vivre par droict, et par auctorité, non par grace. Combien d'honnestes hommes ont mieux aimé perdre la vie que la devoir. Je fuis à me submettre à toute sorte d'obligation, mais sur tout à celle qui m'attache par devoir d'honneur. Je ne trouve rien si cher que ce qui m'est donné, et ce pourquoy ma volonté demeure hypothequée par tiltre de gratitude; et recois plus volontiers les offices qui sont à vendre. Je croy bien: pour ceux-cy, je ne donne que de l'argent; pour les autres, je me donne moy-mesme. Le neud qui me tient par la loy d'honnesteté me semble bien plus pressant et plus poisant que n'est celuy de la contrainte civile. On me garrote plus doucement par un notaire que par moymesme. N'est-ce pas

raison que ma conscience soit beaucoup plus engagée à ce en quoy on s'est simplement fié d'elle? Ailleurs, ma foy ne doit rien; car on ne luy a rien presté: qu'on s'ayde de la fiance et asseurance qu'on à prise hors de moy. J'aymeroy bien plus cher rompre la prison d'une muraille et des loix que de ma parole. La condemnation que je fais de moy est plus vifve et plus vigoureuse que n'est celle des juges, qui ne me prennent que par le visage de l'obligation commune; l'estreinte que ma conscience me donne, est plus serrée et plus severe: je suy lachement les debvoirs auquels on m'entraineroit si je n'y allois. Si l'action n'a quelque splendeur de liberté, elle n'a point de grace et d'honneur;

Quod me jus cogit, vix voluntate impetrent.

Où la necessité me tire, j'ayme à lacher la volonté. *Quia quicquid imperio cogitur exigenti magis quam praestanti acceptum refertur.* J'en sçay qui suyvent cet air jusques à l'injustice; donnent plustost qu'ils ne rendent, prestent plustost qu'ils ne payent, font plus escharsement bien à celuy à qui ils en sont tenus. Je ne vois pas là, mais je touche contre. J'ayme tant à me descharger et

desobliger que j'ay par fois compté à profit les ingratitudes, offences, et desplaisirs, que j'avois receu de ceux à qui, ou par nature ou par accident, j'avois quelque devoir d'amitié; prenant cette occasion de leur faute à autant d'acquit et descharge de ma debte. Encore que je continue à leur payer les offices apparents de la raison publique, je trouve grande espargne pourtant à me soulager un peu de l'attention et sollicitude de ma volonté au dedans, et de l'obligation interne de mon affection; (laquelle j'ay un peu bien violente, et pressante, où je m'addonne; aumoins pour un homme qui ne veut aucunement estre en presse); et me sert cette mesnagerie de quelque consolation aux imperfections de ceux qui me touchent. Je suis bien desplaisant qu'ils en vaillent moins, mais tant y a aussi que j'en espargne quelque chose de mon application et engagement envers eux. J'approuve celuy qui ayme moins son enfant, et son cousin, d'autant qu'il est ou teigneux ou bossu; et non seulement quand il est malicieux, mais aussi quand il est malheureux, et mal nay (Dieu mesme en a rabbatu cela de son pris, et estimation naturelle), pourveu qu'il se porte en ce refroidissement avec moderation et exacte justice. Pour

moy, la proximité n'allege pas les deffaults, elle les aggrave plustost. Aprés tout, selon que je m'entends en la science du bien-faict et de recognoissance, qui est une subtile science et de grand usage, je ne vois guere homme plus libre et moins endebté que je suis jusques à cette heure. Ce que je doibts, je le doibts aux obligations communes et naturelles. Il n'en est point, qui soit plus nettement quitte d'obligations et bienfaicts estrangers;

> nec sunt mihi nota potentum
> Munera.

Les princes me font assez de bien quand ils ne me font point de mal; c'est ce que j'en demande. O combien je suis tenu à Dieu de ce qu'il luy a pleu que j'aye receu immediatement de sa grace tout ce que j'ay; qu'il a retenu particulierement à soy toute ma debte. J'essaye à n'avoir necessairement besoing de personne; c'est chose que chacun peut en soy, mais plus facilement ceux que Dieu a mis à l'abry des necessitez naturelles et urgentes. Il fait bien piteux et hazardeux, despendre d'un autre. Nous mesmes, qui est la plus juste adresse, et la plus seure, ne nous sommes pas assez asseurez: je n'ay rien mien que moy, et si en est la

possession manque et empruntée. Je me cultive et m'augmente de tout mon soing pour y trouver dequoy me satisfaire quand tout m'abandonneroit. On jouit bien plus librement, et plus gayement, des biens estrangers, quand ce n'est pas une jouyssance obligée et contrainte par le besoing: et qu'on a, et en sa volonté, et en sa fortune, la force et les moiens de s'en passer. J'ay tres-volontiers cerché l'occasion de bien faire, et d'attacher les autres à moy; et me semble qu'il n'est point de plus doux usage de nos moyens; mais j'ay encore plus fuy à recevoir que je n'ay cerché à donner. Ma fortune ne m'a guere permis de bien faire à autruy; et ce peu qu'elle m'en a permis, elle l'a assez meigrement logé. Si elle m'eust faict naistre pour tenir quelque rang entre les hommes, j'eusse esté ambitieux de me faire aymer, peu de me faire craindre ou admirer. L'exprimeray je plus insolamment, j'eusse autant regardé au plaire que au prouffiter. Je veux donc dire que, s'il faut ainsi debvoir quelque chose, ce doibt estre à plus legitime titre, que celuy dequoy je parle, auquel la loy de cette miserable guerre m'engage, et non d'un si gros debte comme celuy de ma totale conservation; il m'accable. Je me suis

couché mille foys chez moy, imaginant qu'on me trahiroit et assommeroit cette nuict là, composant avec la fortune, que ce fut sans effroy et sans langueur; et me suis escrié aprés mon patenostre,

Impius hæc tam culta novalia miles habebit.

Quel remede? c'est le lieu de ma naissance, et de la plus part de mes ancestres: ils y ont mis leur affection et leur nom. Nous nous durcissons à tout ce que nous accoustumons. Et, à une miserable condition comme est la nostre, ç'a esté un tresfavorable present de nature que l'accoustumance, qui endort nostre sentiment à la souffrance de plusieurs maux. Les guerres civiles ont cela de pire que les autres guerres, de nous mettre chacun en garnison en sa propre maison:

Quam miserum porta vitam muroque tueri,
Vixque suæ tutum viribus esse domus.

C'est grande extremité d'estre pressé jusques dans son mesnage, et repos domestique. Ce malheur me touche plus que nul autre, pour la condition du lieu ou je me tiens, qui est tousjours le premier et le dernier à la batterie de nos troubles, et où la paix n'a jamais son visage entier;

Tum quoque cum pax est, trepidant formidine belli.

Quoties pacem fortuna lacessit,
Hac iter est bellis. Melius, fortuna, dedisses
Orbe sub Eoo sedem, gelidaque sub Arcto,
Errantesque domos.

Je tire par foys le moyen de me fermir contre ces considerations, de la nonchalance et lacheté. Elles nous menent aussi aucunement à la resolution. Il m'advient souvant d'imaginer avec quelque plaisir les dangiers mortels, et les attendre : je me plonge, la teste baissée, stupidement dans la mort, sans la considerer et recognoistre, comme dans une profondeur muette et obscure qui m'engloutit tout d'un saut, et m'accable en un instant d'un puissant sommeil, plein d'insipidité et indolence. Et, en ces morts courtes et violentes, la consequence que j'en prevoy, me donne plus de consolation que l'effait de trouble. Je ne m'estrange pas tant de l'estre mort comme j'entre en confidence avec le mourir. Je m'envelope et me tapis en cet orage, qui me doibt aveugler et ravir de furie, d'une charge prompte et insensible. Encore s'il advenoit, comme disent aucuns jardiniers, que les roses et violettes naissent plus odoriferantes prés des aux et des oignons, d'autant qu'ils espuisent et tirent à eux ce qu'il y a de mauvaise odeur en la terre ; aussi que ces dépravées natures humassent

tout le venin de mon air et du climat, et m'en rendissent d'autant meilleur et plus pur par leur voisinage, que je ne perdisse pas tout. Cela n'est pas; mais de cecy il en peut estre quelque chose, que la bonté est plus belle et plus attraiante quand elle est rare, et que la contrarieté et diversité roidit et resserre en soy le bien faire, et l'enflamme par la jalousie de l'opposition, et par la gloire. Je respons ordinairement à ceux qui me demandent raison de mes voyages, que je sçay bien ce que je fuis, mais non pas ce que je cerche. Si on me dict que parmy les estrangers il y peut avoir pareilles maladies, et que leurs meurs ne valent pas mieux que les nostres, je respons, premierement, qu'il est malaysé,

Tam multæ scelerum facies.

Secondement, que c'est tousjours gain de changer un mauvais estat à un estat incertain, et que les maux d'autruy ne nous doivent pas poindre comme les nostres. Je ne veux pas oublier cecy, que je ne me mutine jamais tant contre la France que je ne regarde Paris de bon œil; elle a mon cueur dés mon enfance; et m'en est advenu comme des choses excellentes: plus j'ay veu depuis d'autres villes belles, plus la beauté de cette-cy

peut et gaigne sur mon affection. Je l'ayme par elle mesme, et plus en son propre estre que rechargée de pompe estrangiere; je l'ayme tendrement jusques à ses verrues et à ses taches. Je ne suis françois que par cette grand cité, grande en peuples, grande en noblesse de son assiette; mais surtout grande et incomparable en varieté et diversité de commoditez; la gloire de la France, et l'un des plus notables ornemens du monde. Dieu en chasse loing nos divisions: entiere et unie, je la trouve deffendue de toute autre violence. Je l'advise que, de tous les partis, le pire sera celuy qui la metra en division; et ne crains pour elle qu'elle mesme: et crains pour elle autant certes que pour autre piece de cet estat. Tant qu'elle durera, je n'auray faute de retraicte où rendre mes abboys, suffisante à me faire perdre le regret de tout'autre retraicte. Non parce que Socrates l'a dict, mais parce qu'en verité c'est mon humeur, et à l'avanture non sans quelque tort, j'estime tous les hommes mes compatriotes; et embrasse un Polonois comme un François, postposant cette lyaison nationnale à l'universelle et commune: je ne suis guere feru de la douceur d'un air naturel: les cognoissances toutes neufves et toutes miennes

me semblent bien valoir ces autres communes et fortuites cognoissances du voisinage; les amitiez pures de nostre acquest emportent ordinairement celles auquelles la communication du climat ou du sang nous joignent. Nature nous à mis au monde libre et desliez; nous nous emprisonnons en certains destroits: comme les Roys de Perse qui s'obligeoient de ne boire jamais autre eau que celle du fleuve de Choaspez, renonçoyent par sottise à leur droict d'usage en toutes les autres eaux, et assechoient pour leur regard tout le reste du monde. Outres ces raisons, le voyager me semble un exercice profitable. L'ame y a un continuel embesongnement à remarquer des choses incogneuës et nouvelles. Et je ne sçache point meilleure escolle, comme j'ay dict souvent, à former la vie que de luy proposer incessamment la diversité de tant d'autres vies, et luy faire gouster une si perpetuelle varieté de formes de nostre nature. Le corps n'y est ny oisif ny travaillé, et cette moderée agitation le tient en haleine. Je me tien à cheval sans demonter, tout choliqueux que je suis, et sans m'y ennuyer, huict et dix heures,

vires ultra sortemque senectæ.

Nulle saison m'est ennemye, que le chaut aspre d'un Soleil poignant. Car les ombrelles dequoy, depuis les anciens Romains, l'Italie se sert, chargent plus les bras qu'ils ne deschargent la teste. J'ayme les pluyes et les crotes comme les canes. La mutation d'air et de climat ne me touche point, tout Ciel m'est un: je ne suis battu que des alterations internes que je produicts en moy, et celles là m'arrivent moins en voyageant. Je suis mal-aisé à esbranler; mais, estant avoyé, je vay tant qu'on veut. J'estrive plus aux petites entreprises qu'aux grandes, et à m'equiper pour faire une journée, et visiter un voisin, que pour un juste voyage. J'ay apris à faire mes journées à l'Espagnole, d'une traicte, grandes et raisonnables journées; et, aux extremes chaleurs, les passe de nuict, du Soleil couchant jusques au levant. L'autre façon de repaistre en chemin, en tumulte et haste pour la disnée, notamment aux jours cours, est incommode. Mes chevaux en valent mieux: jamais cheval ne m'a failli, qui a sçeu faire avec moy la premiere journée. Je les abreuve par tout, et regardent seulement qu'ils ayent assez de chemin de reste pour battre leur eau. La paresse à me lever donne loisir à ceux

qui me suyvent de disner à leur ayse avant partir. Pour moy, je ne mange jamais trop tard; l'appetit me vient en mangeant, et point autrement; je n'ay point de faim qu'à table. Aucuns se plaignent dequoy je me suis agrée à continuer cette occupation, marié, et tantost vieil. Ils ont tort. Il est mieux temps d'abandonner sa famille quand on l'a mise en train de continuer sans nous; quand on y a laissé de l'ordre qui ne demente point sa forme passée. C'est bien plus d'imprudence de s'esloingner, laissant en sa maison une garde moins fidelle, et qui ayt moins de soing de pourvoir à vostre besoing. La plus utile et honnorable science et occupation à une femme, c'est la science du mesnage. J'en vois quelcune avare, de mesnagere fort peu. C'est sa maistresse qualité, et qu'en moyenne sorte de fortune on doibt chercher en mariage, avant tout autre; c'est le seul doire qui sert à ruyner ou sauver nos maisons. Je l'en mets au propre, luy laissant par mon absence tout le gouvernement en main. Je vois avec despit, en plusieurs mesnages, monsieur revenir maussade et tout vilain du tracas des affaires, environ midy, que madame est encore aprés à se coiffer et atiffer, en son cabinet. C'est à faire aux Roynes, encore

ne sçay-je. Il est ridicule et injuste que la pompe et oysiveté de nos femmes, soit entretenuë de nostre sueur et travail. Si le mary fournit de matiere, nature mesme veut qu'elles fournissent de forme. Quant aux devoirs de l'amitié maritale, qu'on pense estre interessez par cette absence, je ne le crois pas : au rebours, c'est une intelligence qui se refroidit volontiers par une trop continuelle assistance ; et que l'assiduité blesse. Toute femme estrangere nous semble honeste femme ; et chacun sent par experience que la continuation de se voir ne peut representer le plaisir que l'on sent à se perdre, et reprendre à secousses. Je sçay que l'amitié a les bras assez longs pour se tenir et se joindre d'un coin de monde à l'autre ; et notamment cette cy, où il y a une continuelle communication d'offices qui en reveillent l'obligation et la souvenance. Les Stoïciens disent bien, qu'il y a si grande colligance et relation entre les sages, que celuy qui disne en France repaist son compaignon en Ægypte, et qui estend seulement son doigt, où que ce soit, tous les sages qui sont sur la terre habitable en sentent ayde. La jouyssance, et la possession, appartiennent principalement à l'imagination. De Romme en hors, je tiens et

regente ma maison, et les commoditez que j'y ay laissé; je voy croistre mes murailles, mes arbres, et mes rentes, et descroistre, à deux doigts prés comme quand j'y suis:

> Ante oculos errat domus, errat forma locorum.

Si nous ne jouyssons que ce que nous touchons adieu nos escuz quand ils sont en nos coffres, et nos enfans s'ils sont à la chasse. Nous les voulons plus prés. Au jardin est ce loing? à une demy journée? Quoy, dix lieües est-ce loing ou prés? si c'est prés, quoy onze, douze, treze? et ainsi pas à pas. Vrayment celle qui prescrira à son mary, le quantiesme pas finyt le prés, et le quantiesme pas donne commencement au loin, je suis d'advis qu'elle l'arreste entre-deux:

> excludat jurgia finis:
> Utor permisso, caudæque pilos ut equinæ
> Paulatim vello: et demo unum, demo etiam unum
> Dum cadat elusus ratione ruentis acervi,

et qu'elles apellent hardiment la Philosophie à leur secours; à qui quelqu'un pourroit reprocher, puis qu'elle ne voit ny l'un ny l'autre bout de la jointure entre le trop et le peu, le long et le court, le leger et le poisant, le prés et le loing, puis

qu'elle n'en recognoist le commencement ny la fin, qu'elle juge bien incertainement du milieu. Sont elles pas encore femmes et amyes des trespassez, qui ne sont pas au bout de cettuy cy mais en l'autre monde. Nous embrassons et ceux qui ont esté, et ceux qui ne sont point encore, non que les absens. Nous n'avons pas faict marché, en nous mariant, de nous tenir continuelment accouez l'un à l'autre, comme je ne sçay quels petits animaux que nous voyons. Mais ce mot de ce peintre si excellent de leurs humeurs, seroit il point de mise en ce lieu, pour representer la cause de leurs plaintes :

> Uxor, si cesses, aut te amare cogitat,
> Aut tete amari, aut potare, aut animo obsequi,
> Et tibi bene esse soli, cum sibi sit male.

Ou bien seroit ce pas que de soy l'opposition et contradiction les entretient et nourrit, et qu'elles s'accommodent assez, pourveu qu'elles vous incommodent. En la vraye amitié, de laquelle je suis expert, je me donne à mon amy plus que je ne le tire à moy. Je n'ayme pas seulement mieux luy faire bien que s'il m'en faisoit, mais encore qu'il s'en face qu'à moy : il m'en faict lors le plus quand il s'en faict : et si l'absence luy est ou plai-

sante ou utile, elle m'est bien plus douce que sa presence; et ce n'est pas proprement absence, quand il y a moyen de s'entr'advertir. J'ay tiré autrefois usage de nostre esloingnement, et commodité: nous remplissions mieux, et estandions, la possession de la vie, en nous separant: il vivoit, il jouissoit, il voyoit pour moy, et moy pour luy, autant plainement que s'il y eust esté: l'une partie demeuroit oisifve quand nous estions ensemble. Nous nous confondions: la separation du lieu rendoit la conjonction de nos volontez plus riche. Cette fain insatiable de la presence corporelle accuse un peu la foiblesse en la jouyssance des ames. Quant à la vieillesse qu'on m'allegue, au rebours c'est à la jeunesse à s'asservir aus opinions communes, et se contraindre pour autruy. Elle peut fournir à tous les deux, au peuple et à soy: nous n'avons que trop à faire à nous seuls. A mesure que les commoditez naturelles nous faillent, soustenons nous par les artificielles. C'est injustice d'excuser la jeunesse de suyvre ses plaisirs, et deffendre à la vieillesse d'en cercher.—Mais en tel aage, vous ne reviendrez jamais d'un si long chemin.—Que m'en chaut-il; je ne l'entreprens ny pour en revenir, ny pour le parfaire.

J'entreprens seulement de me branler, pendant que le branle me plaist; mon dessein est divisible par tout, il n'est pas fondé en grandes esperances; chaque journée en faict le bout, et le voyage de ma vie se conduict de mesme. J'ay veu pourtant assez de lieux esloignez où j'eusse desiré qu'on m'eust arresté. Pourquoy non, si Chrysippus, Cleanthes, Diogenes, Zenon, Antipater, tant d'honnestes homme, de la secte la plus refroingnée, abandonnerent bien leur pays, sans aucune occasion de s'en plaindre, et seulement pour la beauté d'un autre air. Certes le plus grand desplaisir de mes perigrinations, c'est que je n'y puisse apporter cette resolution d'establir ma demeure ou je me plairroy, et qu'il me faille tousjours proposer de revenir pour m'accommoder aux humeurs communes. Si je craingnois de mourir en autre air que celuy de ma naissance, si je pensois mourir moins à mon aise esloingné des miens, à peine sortiroy-je hors de France; je ne sortirois pas sans effroy hors de ma parroisse; je sens la mort qui me pince continuellement la gorge, ou les reins; mais je suis autrement faict, elle m'est une par tout. Si toutesfois j'avois à choisir, ce seroit, ce croy-je plustost à cheval que

dans un lict, hors de ma maison, et esloigné des miens. Il y a plus de crevecœur que de consolation, à prendre congé de ses amis. J'oublie volontiers ce devoir de nostre entrejent: car, des offices de l'amitié, celuy-là est le seul desplaisant; et oublierois ainsi volontiers à dire ce grand et eternel adieu. S'il se tire quelque commodité de cette assistance, il s'en tire cent incommoditez: j'ay veu plusieurs, mourans bien piteusement assiegez de tout ce train: cette presse les estouffe. C'est contre le devoir, et est tesmoignage de peu d'affection, et de peu de soing, de vous laisser mourir en repos: l'un tourmente vos yeux, l'autre vos oreilles, l'autre la bouche; il n'y a sens, ny membre, qu'on ne vous fracasse. Le cœur vous serre de pitié d'ouyr les plaintes des amis; et de despit à l'avanture d'ouyr d'autres plaintes, feintes et masquées. Qui a tousjours eu le goust tendre, affoibly, il l'a encore plus: il luy faut en une si grande necessité, une main douce, et accommodée à son sentiment, pour le grater justement où il luy cuit, ou qu'on ne le grate point du tout. Si nous avons besoing de sage femme à nous mettre au monde, nous avons bien besoing d'un homme encore plus sage à nous en sortir. Tel, et amy,

le faudroit-il achetter bien cherement pour le service d'une telle occasion. Je ne suis point arrivé à cette vigeur desdaigneuse qui se fortifie en soy-mesme, que rien n'ayde ny ne trouble; je suis d'un point plus bas: je cerche à coniller, et à me desrober de ce passage, non par crainte, mais par art. Ce n'est pas mon advis de faire en cette action preuve ou montre de ma constance. Pour qui? lors cessera tout le droict et interest que j'ay à la reputation. Je me contente d'une mort recueillie en soy, quiete, et solitaire, toute mienne, convenable à ma vie retirée et privée. Au rebours de la superstition Romaine, où on estimoit malheureux celuy qui mouroit sans parler, et qui n'avoit ses plus proches à luy clorre les yeux. J'ay assez affaire à me consoler, sans avoir à consoler autruy; assez de pensées en la teste, sans que les circonstances m'en apportent de nouvelles, et assez de matiere chez moy à m'entretenir sans l'emprunter. Cette partie n'est pas du rolle de la societé, c'est l'acte à un seul personnage. Vivons et rions entre les nostres, allons mourir et rechigner entre les inconneus. On trouve, en payant, qui vous tourne la teste, et qui vous frote les pieds, qui ne vous presse qu'autant que vous

voulez, vous presentant un visage indifferent, vous laissant vous entretenir et plaindre à vostre mode. Je me deffais tous les jours, par discours, de cette humeur puerile et inhumaine qui faict que nous desirons d'esmouvoir par nos maux la compassion et le deuil en nos amis. Nous faisons valoir nos inconveniens outre leur mesure pour attirer leurs larmes; et la fermeté que nous louons en chacun, à soustenir sa mauvaise fortune, nous l'accusons et hayssons en nos proches, quand c'est en la nostre. Nous ne nous contentons pas qu'ils se ressentent de nos maux, si encores ils ne s'en affligent. Il faut estendre la joye, mais retrencher autant qu'on peut la tristesse. Je represente mes maladies, pour le plus, telles qu'elles sont, et evite les parolles de mauvais prognostique, et exclamations composées. Sinon l'allegresse, aumoins la contenance rassise des assistans est propre prés d'un sage malade. Pour se voir en un estat contraire, il n'entre point en querelle avec la santé; il luy plaist de la contempler en autruy, forte et entiere, et en jouyr aumoings par compaignie. Pour se sentir fondre contre-bas, il ne rejecte pas du tout les pensées de la vie, ny ne fuyt aux entretiens communs. Je veux estudier la maladie

quand je suis sain ; quand elle y est, elle faict son impression assez réele, sans que mon imagination l'aide. Nous nous preparons, avant la main, aux voiages que nous entreprenons, et y sommes resolus : l'heure qu'ils nous faut monter à cheval, nous la donnons à l'assistance, et, en sa faveur, l'estendons. . . . . Pour revenir à mon conte, il n'y a donc pas beaucoup de mal à mourir loing, et à part : Mais encore ceux qui en viennent là, de trainer languissans un long espace de vie, ne debvroient, à l'avanture, souhaiter d'empescher de leur misere une grande famille. A qui ne se rendent-ils en fin ennuyeux et insupportables ? Les offices communs n'en vont poinct jusques là. Vous apprenez la cruauté par force à voz meilleurs amis, durcissant et femme et enfans, par long usage, à ne sentir et à ne plaindre plus vos maux. Les souspirs de ma cholique n'apportent plus d'esmoy à personne. Et quand nous tirerions quelque plaisir de leur conversation, ce qui n'advient pas tousjours, pour la disparité des conditions qui produict ayséement mespris ou envie envers qui que ce soit, n'est-ce pas trop d'en abuser tout un aage. Plus je les verrois se contraindre de bon cœur pour moy, plus je plain-

derois leur peine. Nous avons loy de nous appuyer, non pas de nous coucher si lourdement, sur autruy, et nous estayer en leur ruyne: comme celuy qui faisoit esgorger des petits enfans pour se servir de leur sang à guarir une sienne maladie; ou cet autre à qui on fournissoit des jeunes tendrons à couver la nuict ses vieux membres, et mesler la douceur de leur haleine à la sienne aigre et poisante. Je conseillerois volontiers Venise, pour la retraicte d'une telle condition et foiblesse de vie.—Mais, en un si long voyage, vous serez arresté miserablement en un caignart, où tout vous manquera.—La plus part des choses necessaires, je les porte quant et moy; et puis, nous ne sçaurions eviter la fortune, si elle entreprend de nous courre sus. Il ne me faut rien d'extraordinaire quand je suis malade: ce que nature ne peut en moy, je ne veux pas qu'un bolus le face. Tout au commencements de mes fiévres, et des maladies qui m'atterrent, entier encores, et voisin de la santé, je me reconcilie à Dieu, par les derniers offices Chrestiens; et m'en trouve plus libre, et deschargé, et me semble en avoir d'autant meilleure raison de la maladie. De notaire et de conseil, il m'en faut moins que de medecins: ce

que je n'auray estably de mes affaires tout sain, qu'on ne s'attende point que je le face malade : ce que je veux faire pour le service de la mort est tousjours fait : je n'oserois le deslaier d'un seul jour. Et s'il n'y a rien de faict, c'est à dire, ou que le doubte m'en aura retardé le choix, car par fois c'est bien choisir de ne choisir pas, ou que tout à fait je n'auray rien voulu faire. . . . . Pour achever de dire mes foibles humeurs, j'advoue qu'en voyageant je n'arrive gueres en logis où il ne me passe par la fantasie si j'y pourray estre, et malade, et mourant, à mon aise : je veus estre logé en lieu qui me soit bien particulier, sans bruict, non maussade, ou fumeux, ou estouffé. Je cherche à flatter la mort par ces frivoles circonstances, ou pour mieux dire, à me descharger de tout autre empeschement : affin que je n'aye qu'à m'attendre à elle, qui me poisera volontiers assez, sans autre recharge. Je veux qu'elle ayt sa part à l'aisance et commodité de ma vie : ce en est un grand lopin, et d'importance ; et espere meshuy qu'il ne dementira pas le passé. La mort a des formes plus aisées les unes que les autres, et prend diverses qualitez selon la fantasie de chacun. Entre les naturelles, celle qui vient

d'affoiblissement et appesantissement, me semble molle et douce: entre les violentes j'imagine plus mal aiséement un precipice qu'une ruine qui m'accable, et un coup tranchant d'une espée qu'une harquebousade, et eust plustost beu le breuvage de Socrates que de me fraper comme Caton. Et quoy que l'effect soit un, si sent mon imagination difference, comme de la mort à la vie, à me jetter dans une fournaise ardente ou dans le canal d'une platte riviere. Ce n'est qu'un instant; mais il est de tel pois que je donneroy volontiers plusieurs jours de ma vie pour le passer à ma mode. Puisque la fantasie d'un chacun trouve du plus et du moins en son aigreur, puisque chacun à quelque chois entre les formes de mourir, essayons un peu plus avant d'en trouver quelqu'une deschargée de tout desplaisir. Pourroit on pas la rendre encore voluptueuse, comme les commorans d'Antonius et de Cleopatra? Je laisse à part les efforts que la philosophie et la religion produisent, aspres et exemplaires: mais entre les hommes de peu, il s'en est trouvé, comme un Petronius et un Tigellinus à Romme, condamnez par les Empereurs de se donner la mort, selon les reigles de ce temps là, qui l'ont comme

endormie par la mollesse de leurs apprests : ils l'ont faicte couler et glisser parmy la lacheté de leurs occupations accoustumées, entre des garces et bons compagnons ; nul propos de consolation, nulle mention de testament, nulle affectation ambitieuse de constance, nul discours de leur condition future : mais entre les jeux, les festins, facecies, entretiens communs et populaires, et la musique, et des vers amoureux. Ne sçaurions nous imiter cette resolution en plus honneste contenance ? Puis qu'il y a des mors bonnes aux fols, bonnes aux sages, trouvons en qui soyent bonnes à ceux d'entre deux. En cette commodité de logis que je cerche, je n'y mesle pas la pompe et l'amplitude, je la hay plustost : mais certaine proprieté simple, qui se rencontre plus souvent aux lieux où il y a moins d'art, et que nature honore de quelque grace toute sienne ; *non ampliter sed munditer convivium, plus salis quam sumptus.* Et puis, c'est à faire à ceux que les affaires entrainent en plain hyver par les Grisons, d'estre surpris en chemin en cette extremité : moy qui le plus souvant voyage pour mon plaisir, ne me guide pas si mal. S'il faict laid à droicte, je prens à gauche ; si je me trouve mal propre à

monter à cheval, je m'arreste. Et, faisant ainsi, je ne vois à la verité rien qui ne soit aussi plaisant et commode que ma maison; il est vray que je trouve la superfluité tousjours superflue, et remarque quelque empeschement en la delicatesse mesme et en l'abondance. Ay-je laissé quelque chose à voir derriere moy, j'y retourne, c'est tousjours mon chemin. Je ne trace aucune ligne certaine, ny droicte ny courbe. Ne trouve-je point où je vay ce qu'on m'avoit dict, comme il advient souvent que les jugemens d'autruy ne s'accordent pas aux miens, et les ay trouvez plus souvant faux, je ne plains pas ma peine, j'ay apris que ce qu'on disoit n'y est point. J'ay la complexion du corps libre, et le goust commun, autant qu'homme du monde: la diversité des façons d'une nation à autre ne me touche que par le plaisir de la varieté. Chaque usage a sa raison, Soyent des assietes d'estain, de bois, de terre, bouilly ou rosty, beurre ou huyle de nois ou d'olive, chaut ou froit, tout m'est un: et si un, que, vieillissant, j'accuse cette genereuse faculté, et auroy besoin que la delicatesse et le chois arrestat l'indiscretion de mon appetit, et par fois soulageat mon estomac. J'ay honte de voir noz hommes

enyvrez de cette sotte humeur de s'effaroucher des formes contraires aux leurs : il leur semble estre hors de leur element quand ils sont hors de leur vilage : où qu'ils aillent ils se tiennent à leurs façons, et abominent les estrangeres. Retrouvent ils un compatriote en Hongrie, ils festoyent cette avanture ; les voylà à se ralier, et à se recoudre ensemble, à condamner tant de meurs barbares qu'ils voient. Pourquoy non barbares, puis qu'elles ne sont françoises. Encore sont ce les plus habilles qui les ont recogneuës pour en mesdire : la plus part ne prennent l'aller que pour le venir. Ils voyagent couverts et resserrez, d'une prudence taciturne et incommunicable, se defendans de la contagion d'un air incogneu. Ce que je dis de ceux là me ramentoit, en chose semblable, ce que j'ay par fois aperceu en aucuns de noz jeunes courtisans : ils ne tiennent qu'aux hommes de leur sorte, nous regardent comme gens de l'autre monde, avec desdain, ou commiseration : ostez leur les entretiens des mysteres de la court, ils sont hors de leur gibier, aussi neufs pour nous et malhabiles comme nous sommes à eux. On dict bien vray, qu'un honneste homme c'est un homme meslé. Au rebours, je peregrine tressaoul

de nos façons, non pour cercher des Gascons en Sicile, j'en ay assez laissé au logis; je cerche des Grecs plustost, et des Persans; j'acointe ceux là, je les considere; c'est là où je me preste, et où je m'employe. Et, qui plus est, il me semble que je n'ay rencontré guere de manieres qui ne vaillent les nostres: je couche de peu, car à peine ay-je perdu mes girouettes de veuë. Au demeurant, la plus part des compagnies fortuites que vous rencontrez en chemin, ont plus d'incommodité que de plaisir: je ne m'y attache point, asture mesmement que la vieillesse me particularise et sequestre aucunement des formes communes: vous souffrez pour autruy, ou autruy pour vous: l'un et l'autre inconvenient est poisant, mais le dernier me semble encore plus rude. C'est une rare fortune, mais de soulagement inestimable d'avoir un honneste homme, d'entendement ferme, et de meurs conformes aux vostres, qui ayme à vous suyvre, et qui prenne plaisir à vous assister: j'en ay eu faute en tous mes voyages. Mais une telle compagnie, il la faut avoir choisie et acquise dés le logis. Nul plaisir n'a goust pour moy sans communication: il ne me vient pas seulement une gaillarde pensée en l'ame, qu'il ne me fache de

l'avoir produite seul, et n'ayant à qui l'offrir. L'opinion d'Architas me plaist, qu'il feroit desplaisant au ciel mesme, et à se promener dans ces grands et divins corps celestes, sans l'assistance d'un compagnon. Mais il vaut mieux encore estre seul qu'en compagnie ennuyeuse et inepte. Aristippus s'aymoit à vivre estrangier par tout;

> Me si fata, meis paterentur ducere vitam,
> Auspiciis,

je choisirois à la passer le cul sur la selle,

> visere gestiens,
> Qua parte debacchentur ignes,
> Qua nebulæ pluviique rores.

"Avez vous pas des passe-temps plus aysez? dequoy avez vous faute? vostre maison est elle pas en bel air et sain, suffisamment fournie, et capable plus que suffisamment? vostre famille n'en laisse elle pas en reiglement plus au dessoubs d'elle, qu'elle n'en a au dessus en eminence? y a il quelque pensée locale qui vous ulcere, extraordinaire, irremediable?

> Quæ te nunc coquat et vexet sub pectore fixa?

Où pensez vous pouvoir estre sans empeschement et sans destourbier? *nunquam simpliciter fortuna indulget.* Voyez donc qu'il n'y a que vous qui

vous empeschez; et vous vous suyverez par tout, et vous plainderez par tout, car il n'y a satisfaction ça bas que pour les ames ou brutales ou divines. Qui n'a du contentement à une si juste occasion, où pense il le trouver: à combien de milliers d'hommes arreste une telle fortune que la vostre le but de leurs souhaits? Reformez vous seulement, car en cela vous pouvez tout, là où vous n'avez droict que de patience envers la fortune." Je voy la raison de cet advertissement, et la voy tresbien: mais on auroit plustost faict, et plus pertinemment, de me dire en un mot: "Soyez sage." Cette resolution est outre la sagesse: c'est son ouvrage, et sa production. Ainsi faict le medecin, qui va criaillant aprés un pauvre malade languissant, qu'il se resjouysse: il luy conseilleroit un peu moins ineptement, s'il luy disoit: "Soyez sain." Pour moy, je ne suis qu'homme de la commune sorte: c'est un precepte salutaire, certain et d'aisée intelligence: "Contentez vous du vostre," c'est à dire, de la raison; l'execution pourtant n'en est non plus aux plus sages qu'en moy: c'est une parolle populaire, mais elle à une terrible estendue: que ne comprend elle? Toutes choses tombent en discretion et mesure. Je sçay

bien qu'à le prendre à la lettre, ce plaisir de voyager porte tesmoignage d'inquietude et d'irresolution : aussi sont ce nos maistresses qualitez, et prædominantes. Ouy, je le confesse, je ne vois rien, seulement en songe et par souhait, où je me puisse tenir : le seul desir de la varieté me paye, et la possession de la diversité ; aumoins si aucune chose me paye. A voyager, cela mesme me nourrit que je me puis arrester sans interest, et que j'ay où m'en divertir commodéement. J'ayme la vie privée, par ce que c'est par mon chois que je l'ayme, non par disconvenance à la vie publique, qui est à l'avanture, autant selon ma complexion. J'en sers plus gayement mon prince, par ce que c'est par libre eslection de mon jugement, et ma raison, et que je n'y suis pas rejecté ny contrainct, pour estre irrecevable à tout autre party, et malvoulu : ainsi du reste. Je hay les morceaux que la necessité me taille : toute commodité me tiendroit à la gorge, de laquelle seule j'aurois à despendre :

Alter remus aquas, alter mihi radat arenas :

une seule corde ne m'arreste jamais à mon aise. Il y a de la vanité, dictes vous, en cet amusement ;

mais où non? Et ces beaux preceptes sont vanité, et vanité nostre sagesse. Ces exquises subtilitez ne sont propre qu'au presche: ce sont discours qui nous veulent envoyer tous bastez en l'autre monde. La vie est un mouvement materiel et corporel, action imparfaicte de sa propre essence, et desreglée: je m'emploie à la servir selon elle.

Quisque suos patimur manes.

A quoy faire, ces poinctes eslevées de la philosophie sur lesquelles aucun estre humain ne se peut rassoir, et ces regles qui excedent nostre usage et nostre force. Je voy souvent qu'on nous propose des images de vie, lesquelles, ny le proposant ny les auditeurs n'ont aucune esperance de suyvre, ny, qui plus est, envie. De ce mesme papier où il vient d'escrire l'arrest de condemnation contre un adultere, le juge en desrobe un lopin pour en faire un poulet à la femme de son compaignon. Et tel condamne des hommes à mourir pour des crimes qu'il n'estime point fautes. J'ay veu en ma jeunesse, un galant homme presenter d'une main au peuple des vers excellens et en beauté et en desbordement, et de l'autre main, en mesme instant, la plus quereleuse

et espineuse reformation theologienne de quoy le monde se soit desjeuné il y a long temps. Les hommes vont ainsin. On laisse les loix et preceptes suivre leur voie ; nous en tenons une autre : non par desreiglement de meurs seulement, mais par opinion souvent, et par jugement contraire. Sentez lire un discours de philosophie : l'invention, l'eloquence, la pertinence frape incontinent vostre esprit, et vous esmeut : il n'y a rien qui chatouille et poigne vostre conscience ; ce n'est pas à elle qu'on parle, est-il pas vray ? Si disoit Ariston, que ny une esteuve ny une lecon n'est d'aucun fruict, si elle ne nettoye et ne decrasse. On peut s'arrester à l'escorce : mais c'est aprés qu'on en a retiré la mouele : comme aprés avoir avalé le bon vin d'une belle coupe, nous en considerons les graveures et l'ouvrage. En toutes les chambrées de la philosophie ancienne, cecy se trouvera, qu'un mesme ouvrier y publie des reigles de temperance, et publie ensemble des escris d'amour et desbauche. Ce n'est pas qu'il y ait une conversion miraculeuse qui les agite à ondées : mais c'est que Solon se represente tantost soy-mesme, tantost en forme de legislateur : tantost il parle pour la presse, tantost pour soy. Et prend pour soy les

reigles libres et naturelles, s'asseurant d'une santé ferme et entiere:

Curentur dubii medicis majoribus ægri.

Aux estomacs tendres, il faut des reigles contraintes et artificielles: ainsi font nos medecins, qui mangent le melon et boivent le vin fraiz, ce pendant qu'il tiennent leur patient obligé au sirop et à la panade. "Je ne sçay quels livres, disoit la courtisane Lays, quelle sapience, quelle philosophie, mais ces gens là battent aussi souvant à ma porte que nuls autres." D'autant que nostre licence nous porte tousjours au delà de ce qui nous est loisible et permis, on a estressy souvant outre la raison les preceptes et loys de nostre vie;

Nemo satis credit tantum delinquere quantum
Permittas.

Il seroit à desirer, qu'il y eust plus de proportion du commandement à l'obeyssance: et semble la visée injuste, à laquelle on ne peut atteindre. Il n'est si homme de bien, qu'il mette à l'examen des loix toutes ses actions et pensées, qui ne soit pendable dix fois en sa vie, voire tel qu'il seroit tres-grand dommage et tres-injuste de punir et de perdre:

Olle, quid ad te,
De cute quid faciat ille, vel illa sua?

Et tel pourroit n'offenser les loix, qui n'en meriteroit point la loüange d'homme de vertu, tant cette relation est trouble et inegale. Nous n'avons garde d'estre gens de bien selon Dieu, nous ne le sçaurions estre selon nous. L'humaine sagesse n'arriva jamais aux devoirs qu'elle s'estoit elle mesme prescrit: et si elle y estoit arrivée, elle s'en prescriroit d'autres au delà, où elle aspirat tousjours et pretendit, tant nostre estat est ennemy de consistance. Au pis aller, cette difforme liberté de se presenter à deux endroicts, et les actions d'une façon, les discours de l'autre, soit loisible à ceux qui disent les choses; mais elle ne le peut estre à ceux qui se disent eux mesme, comme je fay: il faut que j'aille de la plume comme des pieds. La vie commune doibt avoir conferance aux autres vies. La vertu de Caton estoit vigoreuse outre la raison de son siecle; et à un homme qui se mesloit de gouverner les autres, destiné au service commun, il se pourroit dire que c'estoit une justice, sinon injuste, au moins vaine et hors de saison. La vertu assignée aus affaires du monde est une vertu à plusieurs plis,

encoigneures, et couddes, pour s'apliquer et joindre à l'humaine foiblesse; meslée et artificielle, non droitte, nette, constante, ny purement innocente. Les annales reprochent jusques à cette heure à quelqu'un de nos Roys de s'estre trop simplement laissé aller aux consciencieuses persuasions de son confesseur. Les affaires d'estat ont des preceptes plus hardis:

exeat aula,
Qui vult esse pius.

J'ay autresfois essayé d'employer au service des negotiations publiques les opinions et reigles de vivre, ainsi rudes, neufves, impolies ou impollues, comme je les ay nées chez moy, ou raportées de mon institution, et desquelles je me sers commodéement en particulier; une vertu scholastique et novice; je les y ay trouvées dangereuses et ineptes. Celuy qui va en la presse, il faut qu'il gauchisse, qu'il serre ses couddes, qu'il recule, ou qu'il avance, voire qu'il quitte le droict chemin, selon ce qu'il rencontre; qu'il vive non tant selon soy que selon autruy, non selon ce qu'il se propose, mais selon ce qu'on luy propose, selon le temps, selon les hommes, selon les affaires. Je sens que si j'avois à me dresser tout à faict à telles

occupations, il m'y faudroit beaucoup de changement et de rabillage. Quand je pourrois cela sur moy (et pourquoy ne le pourrois je, avec le temps et le soing), je ne le voudrois pas. De ce peu que je me suis essayé en cette occupation du monde, je m'en suis d'autant degousté : je me sens fumer en l'ame par fois aucunes tentations vers l'ambition, mais je me bande et obstine au contraire :

At tu, Catulled, obstinatus obdura.

On ne m'y appelle guieres, et je m'y convie aussi peu. Nous ne sçavons pas distinguer les facultez des hommes ; elles ont des divisions et bornes malaysées à choisir, et delicates. De conclurre par la suffisance d'une vie particuliere quelque suffisance à l'usage public, c'est mal conclud : tel se conduict bien qui ne conduict pas bien les autres, et tel dresse bien un siege qui dresseroit mal une bataille, et discourt bien en privé qui harengueroit mal un peuple ou un prince. Voyre, à l'aventure, est-ce plustost tesmoignage à celuy qui peut l'un de ne pouvoir point l'autre, qu'autrement. Nostre suffisance est detaillée à menues pieces ; la mienne n'a point de latitude, et si est chetifve en nombre. Saturninus, à ceux qui luy avoyent

deferé tout commandement: "Compaignons, fit-il, vous avez perdu un bon capitaine pour en faire un mauvais general d'armée." Qui se vante, en un temps malade comme cettuy-cy, d'employer au service du monde une vertu nayfve et exquise, ou il ne la cognoit pas, les opinions se corrompant avec les meurs (de vray, oyez la leur peindre, oyez la plus part se vanter de leurs deportemens et former leurs reigles; au lieu de peindre la vertu, ils peignent l'injustice toute pure et le vice, et la presentent ainsi fauce à l'institution des princes); ou, s'il la cognoist, il se vante à tort, et, quoy qu'il die, faict mille choses dequoy sa conscience l'accuse. Je croirois volontiers Seneca de l'experience qu'il en fit en pareille occasion, pourveu qu'il m'en voulut parler à cœur ouvert. La plus honorable marque de bonté en une telle necessité, c'est recognoistre librement sa faute, et celle d'autruy; appuyer et retarder de sa puissance l'inclination vers le mal, suyvre envis cette pente, mieux esperer et mieux desirer. J'aperçois en ces desmambremens de la France et divisions où nous sommes tombez, chacun se travaille à deffendre sa cause, mais, jusques aux meilleurs, avec desguisement et mensonge. Qui en escriroit

rondement, en escriroit temererement et vitieusement. Le plus juste party, si est-ce encore le membre d'un corps vermoulu et vereux; mais d'un tel corps, le membre moins malade s'appelle sain, et à bon droit, d'autant que nos qualitez n'ont tiltre qu'en la comparaison. L'innocence civile se mesure selon les lieux et saisons. J'aymerois bien à voir en Xenophon une telle louange d'Agesilaus. Estant prié par un prince voisin, avec lequel il avoit autrefois esté en guerre, de le laisser passer en ses terres, il l'octroya, luy donnant passage à travers le Peloponnesse, et non seulement ne l'emprisonna ou empoisonna, le tenant à sa mercy, mais l'accueillit courtoisement sans luy faire offence. A ces humeurs là, ce ne seroit rien dire; ailleurs et en autre temps, il se fera compte de la franchise et magnanimité d'une telle action: ces babouyns capettes s'en fussent moquez, si peu retire l'innocence spartaine à la françoise. Nous ne laissons pas d'avoir des hommes vertueux; mais c'est selon nous. Qui a ses meurs establies en reglement au dessus de son siecle, ou qu'il torde et émousse ses regles, ou, ce que je luy conseille plustost, qu'il se retire à quar-

tier, et ne se mesle point de nous. Qu'y gaigneroit-il?

> Egregium sanctumque virum si cerno, bimembri
> Hoc monstrum puero, et miranti jam sub aratro,
> Piscibus inventis, et fœtæ comparo mulæ.

On peut regretter les meilleurs temps, mais non pas fuyr aux presens; on peut desirer autres magistrats, mais il faut, ce nonobstant, obeyr à ceux icy; et à l'advanture y a il plus de recommendation d'obeyr aux mauvais qu'aux bons. Autant que l'image des loix receuës et antiennes de cette monarchie reluyra en quelque coin, m'y voila planté; si elles viennent par malheur à se contredire, troubler, et empescher entr'elles, et produire deux pars, de chois doubteux et difficile, mon election sera volontiers d'eschapper et me desrober à cette tempeste; nature m'y pourra prester ce pendant la main, ou les hazards de la guerre. Entre Cesar et Pompeius, je me fusse franchement declaré; mais entre ces trois voleurs qui vindrent depuis, ou il eust fallu se cacher, ou suyvre le vent; ce que j'estime loisible quand la raison ne guide plus.

> Quo diversus abis?

Cette farcisseure est un peu hors de mon theme. Je m'esgare, mais plustost par licence, que par

mesgarde : mes fantasies se suyvent, mais par fois c'est de loing ; et se regardent, mais d'une veuë oblique ; les noms de mes chapitres n'en embrassent pas tousjours la matiere ; souvent ils la denotent seulement, par quelque marque, comme ces autres noms, Sylla, Cicero, Torquatus. J'ayme l'alleure poetique, à sauts et à gambades, et vois au change, indiscrettement et tumultuairement : il faut avoir un peu de folie, qui ne veut avoir plus de sottise : mille poëtes trainent et languissent à la prosaïque, mais la meilleure prose ancienne reluit par tout de la vigeur et hardiesse poetique, et represente quelque air de sa fureur : il luy faut certes quitter la maistrise, et preeminence en la parlerie. J'entends que la matiere se distingue soy-mesmes, elle montre assez où elle se change, où elle conclud, où elle commence, où elle se reprend, sans l'entrelasser de paroles de liaison, et de cousture, introduictes pour le service des oreilles foibles, ou nonchallantes, et sans me gloser moy mesme. Qui est celuy, qui n'ayme mieux n'estre pas leu, que de l'estre en dormant, ou en fuyant. Puisque je ne puis arrester l'attention du lecteur par le pois, *manco male,* s'il advient que je l'arreste par mon embrouilleure :

voire mais, il se repentira aprés, de s'y estre amusé; c'est mon, mais il s'y sera tousjours amusé. Et puis il est des humeurs comme cela, à qui l'intelligence porte desdain, qui m'en estimeront mieux de ce qu'ils ne sçauront ce que je dis; ils conclurront la profondeur de mon sens par l'obscurité; laquelle, à parler en bon escient, je hay, et l'eviterois si je me sçavois contrefaire. Aristote se vante en quelque lieu de l'affecter; vitieuse imagination. J'avois à dire, que je veus mal à cette raison trouble-feste; et que ces projects extravagants qui travaillent la vie, et ces opinions si fines, si elles ont de la verité, je la trouve trop chere et incommode. Au rebours, je m'emploie à faire valoir la vanité mesme, et la grosserie, si elle m'apporte du contentement; et me laisse aller aprés mes inclinations naturelles, sans les contreroller de si prés. J'ay veu ailleurs des maisons ruynées, et des statues, et du ciel, et de la terre; ce sont tousjours des hommes. Tout cela est vray, et si pourtant ne sçauroy revoir si souvent le tombeau de cette ville, si grande et si puissante, que je ne l'admire et revere. Le soing des morts nous est en recommandation. Or j'ay esté nourry dés mon enfance avec ceux icy:

j'ay eu connoissance des affaires de Romme long temps avant que je l'aye eue de ceux de ma maison. Je sçavois le Capitole et son plant avant que je sceusse le Louvre, et le Tibre avant la Seine. J'ay eu plus en teste les conditions et fortunes de Lucullus, Metellus, et Scipion, que je n'ay d'aucuns hommes des nostres. Ils sont trespassez : si est bien mon pere, aussi entierement qu'eux, et s'est esloigné de moy, et de la vie, autant en dixhuict ans que ceux-là ont faict en seize cens ; duquel pourtant, je ne laisse pas d'embrasser et practiquer la memoire, l'amitié et societé, d'une parfaicte union et tres-vive. Voire, de mon humeur, je me rends plus officieux envers les trespassez : ils ne s'aydent plus, ils en requierent, ce me semble, d'autant plus mon ayde : la gratitude est là, justement en son lustre. Le bien-faict est moins richement assigné où il y a retrogradation, et reflection. Arcesilaus visitant Appelles malade, et le trouvant en pauvre estat, luy fourra tout bellement soubs le chevet du lict de l'argent qu'il luy donnoit, et, en le luy celant, luy donnoit en outre exemption de luy en sçavoir gré. Ceux qui ont merité de moy de l'amitié et de la reconnoissance, ne l'ont jamais perdue pour

n'y estre plus; je les ay mieux payez, et plus soigneusement, absens et ignorans. Je parle plus affectueusement de mes amis, quand il n'y à plus moyen qu'ils le sçachent. Or j'ay attaqué cent querelles pour la deffence de Pompeius, et pour la cause de Brutus. Cette accointance dure encore entre nous. Les choses presentes mesmes, nous ne les tenons que par la fantasie. Me trouvant inutile à ce siecle, je me rejecte à cet autre, et en suis si embabouyné que l'estat de cette vieille Romme, libre, juste, et florissante (car je n'en ayme ny la naissance ny la vieillesse) m'interesse et me passionne. Parquoy, je ne sçauroy revoir si souvent l'assiette de leurs rues, et de leurs maisons, et ces ruynes profondes jusques aux Antipodes, que je ne m'y amuse. Il me plaist de considerer leur visage, leur port, et leurs vestements; je remache ces grands noms entre les dents, et les fais retentir à mes oreilles. Des choses qui sont en quelque partie grandes et admirables, j'en admire les parties mesmes communes. Je les visse volontiers deviser, promener, et soupper; ce seroit ingratitude de mespriser les reliques et images de tant d'honnestes hommes, et si valeureux, que j'ay veu vivre et mourir, et

qui nous donnent tant de bonnes instructions par leur exemple, si nous les sçavions suivre. Et puis cette mesme Romme que nous voyons merite qu'on l'ayme, confederée de si long temps et par tant de tiltres à nostre couronne ; seule ville commune et universelle ; le magistrat souverain qui y commande est reconneu pareillement ailleurs ; c'est la ville metropolitaine de toutes les nations Chrestiennes : l'Espagnol et le François, chacun y est chez soy : pour estre des princes de cet estat, il ne faut qu'estre de Chrestienté, où qu'elle soit. Il n'est lieu çà bas, que le ciel ayt embrassé avec telle influence de faveur, et telle constance ; sa ruyne mesme est glorieuse et enflée ; encore retient elle au tombeau des marques et image d'empire. Quelqu'un se blasmeroit, et se mutineroit en soy-mesme de se sentir chatouiller d'un si vain plaisir. Nos humeurs ne sont pas trop vaines, qui sont plaisantes. Quelles qu'elles soient qui contentent constamment un homme capable de sens commun, je ne saurois avoir le cœur de le pleindre. Je doibs beaucoup à la fortune, dequoy jusques à cette heure elle n'a rien fait contre moy outrageux, et au delà de ma force. Seroit ce pas sa façon

de laisser en paix ceux de qui elle n'est point importunée;

> Quanto quisque sibi plura negaverit,
> A Diis plura feret; nil cupientium
> Nudus castra peto; multa petentibus
> Desunt multa.

Si elle continue, elle m'en envoyera tres-content, et satisfaict;

> nihil supra,
> Deos lacesso.

Mais gare le heurt; il en est mille qui rompent au port. Je me console aiséement de ce qui adviendra icy quand je n'y seray plus; les choses presentes m'embesoignent assez;

> Fortunæ cætera mando.

Aussi n'ay-je poinct cette forte liaison qu'on dict attacher les hommes à l'advenir par les enfans qui portent leur nom, et leur honneur; et en doibs desirer à l'avanture d'autant moins s'ils sont si desirables. Je ne tiens que trop au monde et à cette vie par moy-mesme: je me contente d'estre en prise de la fortune par les circonstances proprement necessaires à mon estre, sans luy alonger par ailleurs sa jurisdiction sur moy; et n'ay jamais estimé qu'estre sans enfans fut un defaut qui deut rendre la vie moins complete, et moins contente.

La vacation sterile a bien aussi ses commoditez. Les enfans sont du rolle des choses qui n'ont pas fort dequoy estre desirées; notamment à cette heure qu'il seroit si difficile de les rendre bons; et si ont justement dequoy estre regrettées, à qui les perd aprés les avoir acquises. Celuy qui me laissa ma maison en charge prognostiquoit que je la deusse ruyner, regardant à mon humeur, si peu casaniere. Il se trompa; me voicy comme j'y entray, sinon un peu mieux, sans office pourtant et sans benefice. Au demeurant, si la fortune ne m'a faict aucune offence violente, et extraordinaire, aussi n'a-elle pas de grace. Tout ce qu'il y a de ses dons chez nous, il y est avant moy, et au delà de cent ans. Je n'ay aucun bien essentiel et solide que je doive à sa liberalité: elle m'a faict quelques faveurs venteuses, honnoraires, et titulaires, sans substance; et me les a aussi à la verité, non pas accordées, mais offertes, Dieu sçait, à moy, qui suis tout materiel, qui ne me paye que de la realité encores bien massive, et qui, si je l'osois confesser, ne trouverois l'avarice guere moins excusable que l'ambition, ny la douleur moins evitable que la honte, ny la santé moins desirable que la doctrine, ou la richesse

que la noblesse. Parmy ses faveurs vaines, je n'en ay poinct qui plaisent tant à cette niaise humeur qui s'en paist chez moy, qu'une bulle authentique de bourgeoisie Romaine, qui me fut octroyée dernierement que j'y estois, pompeuse en seaux, et lettres dorées, et octroyée avec toute gracieuse liberalité. Et par ce qu'elles se donnent en divers stile, plus ou moins favorable, et qu'avant que j'en eusse veu, j'eusse esté bien aise qu'on m'en eust monstré un formulaire, je veux, pour satisfaire à quelqu'un, s'il s'en trouve malade de pareille curiosité que la mienne, la transcrire icy en sa forme.

> Quod Horatius Maximus, Martius Cecius, Alexander Mutus, almæ urbis conservatores de Ill^mo viro Michaele Montano, equite sancti Michaelis, et a Cubiculo Regis Christianissimi, Romana Civitate donando, ad Senatum retulerunt; S. P. Q. R. de ea re ita fieri censuit.

Cum, veteri more et instituto, cupide illi semper studioseque suscepti sint, qui, virtute ac nobilitate præstantes, magno Reip. nostrae usui atque ornamento fuissent vel esse aliquando possent: Nos, majorum nostrorum exemplo atque auctoritate permoti, præclaram hanc Consuetudinem nobis imitandam ac servandam fore censemus. Quamobrem, cum Ill^mus Michel Montanus, Eques sancti Michaelis, et a Cubiculo Regis Christianissimi, Romani nominis studiosissimus, et familiæ laude atque splendore et propriis virtutum miritis dignissimus sit, qui summo

Senatus Populique Romani judicio ac studio in Romanam Civitatem adsciscatur, placere Senatui P. Q. R. Illmum Michaelem Montanum, rebus omnibus ornatissimum, atque huic inclyto Populo charissimum, ipsum posterosque in Romanam Civitatem adscribi ornarique omnibus et præmiis et honoribus quibus illi fruuntur qui Cives Patritiique Romani nati aut jure optimo facti sunt. In quo censere Senatum P. Q. R. se non tam illi Jus Civitatis largiri quam debitum tribuere, neque magis beneficium dare quam ab ipso accipere, qui, hoc Civitatis munere accipiendo, singulari Civitatem ipsam ornamento atque honore affecerit. Quam quidem S. C. auctoritatem iidem Conservatores per Senatus P. Q. R. scribas in acta referri, atque in Capitolii curia servari, privilegiumque hujusmodi fieri, solitoque urbis sigillo communiri curarunt. Anno ab urbe condita CXↃCCCXXXI post Christum natum M.D.LXXXI,III Idus Martii.

Horatius Fuscus, sacri S. P. Q. R. scriba.

Vincent. Martholus, sacri S. P. Q. R. scriba.

N'estant bourgeois d'aucune ville, je suis bien aise de l'estre de la plus noble qui fut et qui sera onques.

THE INSCRIPTIONS IN MONTAIGNE'S LIBRARY

"We are as much informed of a writer's genius by what he selects as by what he originates."

Emerson.

THE INSCRIPTIONS IN MONTAIGNE'S LIBRARY[1]

The same year in which he edited La Boëtie's works (1571) Montaigne withdrew from life in the world, and established himself permanently in his château of Montaigne, placing in a room adjoining his Library a Latin inscription which, translated, runs thus:

"In the year of Christ 1571 Michael Montaigne, aged 38, on his birthday, the day preceding the Kalends of March, already long wearied of the servitude of the law-courts, and of public offices, has retired, with faculties still entire, to the arms of the learned virgins, there to pass in all quiet and security, such length of days as remain to him, of his already more than half-spent years, if so the fates permit him to finish this abode and

[1] The material facts on which this paper is based are derived from '*Montaigne chez lui. Visite de deux amis à son château. Lettre à M. le docteur J-F. Payen,* [Par E. Galy et L. Lapeyre], Perigueux, 1861. Tiré à 150 exemplaires. 8vo., pp. 70.

these sweet ancestral retreats consecrated to his freedom and tranquillity and leisure."

It was probably at this time that he caused to be inscribed on the beams of the ceiling of his Library some fifty and more 'mottoes' taken from various Greek and Latin authors and from the Bible. They are of interest as indicating the tone of his mind before he began to write the Essays and while he was first writing them. Some of the same sentences are imbedded in the Essays, where the use of them often explains the thought in Montaigne's mind in selecting them for his Library.

The order in which they are given by the two gentleman who saw and described them in 1860, is here followed.

I.

Extrema homini scientia ut res sunt boni consulere, caetera securum. ECCL.[1]

(The ultimate wisdom of man is to consider things as good, and for the rest to be untroubled).[2]

[1] The references that are in small capitals (all to the Bible) are on the beams: those in brackets have been made by commentators.

[2] The construction of this sentence, and of one or two others, is so peculiar as to make the exact meaning doubtful.

These words, or any very like them, are not to be found either in Ecclesiastes or Ecclesiasticus, and in general in the mottoes ascribed to these books, the spirit rather than the exact original form is given. But Montaigne repeating the sentiment of this motto in the '*Apologie,*' ascribes it again (as has not been before observed) to Ecclesiastes. "Accepte, dict L'Ecclesiaste, en bonne part les choses au visage et au goust qu'elles se presentent à toy, du jour à la journée; le demeurant est hors de ta connoissance" (1580).[1]

II.

Cognoscendi studium homini dedit Deus eius torquendi gratia. ECCL. I.

(God gave to man the desire for knowledge for the sake of tormenting him.)

This thought is to be found in Ecclesiastes (i. 13): "Et proposui in animo meo quaerere et investigare sapienter de omnibus quae fiunt sub sole. Hanc occupationem pessimam dedit Deus filiis hominum ut occuparentur in ea."

[1] Montaigne's frequent use of Ecclesiastes reminds one of Lowell's remark: "Montaigne is but Ecclesiastes writing in the sixteenth century," but this point of view loses sight of the lambencies of gay humour that play over his pages.

Montaigne translates the motto in the essay *'De la Præsumption:'* "La curiosité de connoistre les choses a esté donnée aux hommes pour fleau, dit la sacrosaincte parole." (1580.)

The thought was often in his mind; he says elsewhere "La gloire et la curiosité sont les deux fleaux de nostre ame"[1] (1580); and the same note is struck distinctly twice in the *'Apologie,'* once by the quotation of Ecclesiastes i. 18 (1580).

III.

Τοὺς μὲν κενοὺς ἀσκοὺς το πνεῦμα, τοὺς δὲ ἀνοήτους ἀνθρώπους τὸ οἴημα.

[This sentence is found in the *Florilegium* of Stobaeus (in the chapter: Of Arrogance), attributed to Socrates.]

(As the wind puffs out empty wine-skins, so pride of opinion foolish men.)[2]

Cf. *Essais:* III. 13: "Nostre monde n'est formé qu'à l'ostentation: les hommes ne s'enflent que de vent, et se manient à bonds, comme les balons" (1588).

[1] Essais: *C'est folie de rapporter le vray et le faux à nostre suffisance.*

[2] For the translations and revision of the Greek inscriptions I am indebted to the kindness of a friend.

IV.

Omnium quae sub sole sunt fortuna et lex par est. ECCL. 9.

Translated by Montaigne (in the '*Apologie*'): "Tout ce qui est sous le ciel, dit le sage, court une loy et fortune pareille."

The verse from which this is derived is in the Vulgate as follows: "Hoc est pessimum inter omnia, quae sub sole fiunt, quia eadem cunctis eveniunt." (Ecclesiastes, ix. 3.)

V.

Οὐ μᾶλλον οὕτως ἔχει ἢ ἐκείνως ἢ οὐδετέρως.

[Sextus Empiricus. *Hypotyposes* I. 19.]

(It is no more in this way than in that or in neither.)

In the '*Apologie*' (again) Montaigne, speaking of the Pyrrhonists, says: "Leurs façons de parler sont, 'Je n'etablis rien: Il n'est non plus ainsi qu'ainsin, ou que ny l'un ny l'autre'" (1580).

VI.

Orbis magnae vel parvae earum rerum quas Deus tam multas fecit notitia in nobis est. ECCL.

(We have a conception of the great or the small world of those things of which God has made so many.)

The suggestion here may be derived from Ecclesiasticus xvii. 6, 7.

VII.

Ὁρῶ γὰρ ἡμᾶς οὐδὲν ὄντας ἄλλο πλὴν
εἴδωλ', ὅσοιπερ ζῶμεν, ἢ κούφην σκιάν.

[This is from the *Ajax* of Sophocles, (125, 126), but Montaigne unquestionably took it out of Stobaeus: Of Arrogance.]

(For I see that we are but phantoms, all we who live, or fleeting shadows.)

VIII.

O miseras hominum mentes! O pectora caeca!
Qualibus in tenebris vitae, quantisque periclis
Degitur hoc aevi quodcunque est?

[Lucretius. II. 14.]

(O wretched minds of men! O blind hearts! in what darkness of life and in how great dangers is passed this term of life whatever its duration.)

IX.

Κρίνει τίς αὐτὸν πώποτ' ἀνθρώπον μέγαν,
ὃν ἐξαλείφει πρόφασις ἡ τυχοῦσ' ὅλον.

[A fragment of Euripides; in Stobaeus: Of Arrogance.]

(What man will account himself great,—whom a chance occasion destroys utterly.)

X

omnia cum coelo terraque marique
Sunt nihil ad summam summaï totius.

[Lucretius. VI. 678-9.]

(All things, together with heaven and earth and sea, are nothing to the sum of the universal sum.)

See once more the '*Apologie*': "Tu ne vois que l'ordre et la police de ce petit caveau où tu es logé . . . . cette piéce n'est rien au pris du tout:

omnia cum coelo, terraque, marique
Nil sunt ad summam summai totius omnem."

(1580).

XI.

Vidisti hominem sapientem sibi videri? magis illo spem habebit insipiens. PROV. 26.

(Seest thou a man wise in his own conceit? there is more hope of a fool than of him.)

XII.

Quare ignoras quomodo anima conjungitur corpori, nescis opera Dei. ECCL. 11.

The inscription is much obliterated and this reading is a restoration. The original (Ecclesiastes xi. 5) is: "Quomodo ignoras quae sit via

spiritus, et qua ratione compingantur ossa in ventre praegnantis, sic nescis opera Dei qui fabricator est omnium."

(As thou knowest not what is the way of the spirit, nor how the bones do grow in the womb of her who is with child, even so thou knowest not the works of God who maketh all.)

Montaigne dwells on this thought in the *'Apologie':* (he is speaking of the effects produced by the soul on the body): "—la nature de la liaison et cousture de ces admirables ressorts, jamais homme ne l'a sceu, comme dict Salomon (1580) :—(*comme dict Salomon,* omitted in 1595) 'Omnia incerta ratione et in naturae majestate abdita,' dit Pline; et S. Augustin: 'Modus quo corporibus adhaerent spiritus omnino mirus est, nec comprehendi ab homine potest, et hoc ipse homo est.'" (1596.)

XIII.

Ἐνδέχεται καὶ οὐκ ἐνδέχεται

[Sextus Empiricus: *Hypotyposes.*]

(It is possible and it is not possible.)

XIV.

Ἀγαθὸν ἀγαστόν

(The good is admirable.)

In the essay *'De la Physionomie'* we find: "Un mesme mot embrasse en grec le bel et le bon: et le Saint Esprit appelle souvent bons, ceux qu'il veut dire beaux." (1595.)

XV.

Κέραμος ἄνθρωπος

(A man of clay.)

See the Adages of Erasmus. **Κεραμεὺς ἄνθρωπος,** homo fictilis, id est mollis, imbecillis, fragilis, ductum a vasis testaceis quae facile comminuuntur."[1]

XVI.

Nolite esse prudentes apud vosmetipsos.

AD ROM. XII.

(Be not wise in your own conceits.)

The following is decipherable under the Latin.

Ἡ δεισιδαιμονία καθάπερ πατρὶ τῷ τύφῳ πείθεται.

[A sentence of Socrates in Stobaeus: Of Arrogance.]

[1] That Montaigne was familiar with Erasmus' Adages is evident by the remark (in Liv. III. 2.—1595) "Qui m'eust faict veoir Erasme autrefois, il eust esté mal-aisé que je n'eusse prins pour adages et apophthegmes tout ce qu'il eust dit à son vallet et à son hostesse."

(Superstition obeys conceit as a father.)

See the *'Apologie:'* "—ce que dict ce mot grec ancien, que la superstition suyt l'orgueil, et luy obeit comme à son pére: ἡ δεισιδαιμονία καθάπερ πατρὶ τῷ τύφῳ πείθεται." (1580.)

XVII.

. Οὐ γὰρ ἐᾷ φρονέειν ὁ θεὸς μέγα ἄλλον ἢ ἑωυτόν.

[Herodotus. VII. 10.]

(God permits no one but himself to magnify himself.)

Montaigne quotes this sentence in the *'Apologie'* (1580).

The following is decipherable under the Greek: *Summum nec metuas diem, nec optes.*

[Martial. X. 47.]

(Neither fear nor desire the last day.)

See *Essais:* Liv. II. 37.

(He is speaking of his "colic"): "J'avoy desjà gaigné cela, de ne tenir à la vie que par la vie seulement; elle desnouera encore cette intelligence; et Dieu veuille qu'en fin, si son aspreté vient à surmonter mes forces, elle ne me rejette à l'autre extremité, non moins vitieuse, d'aymer et desirer de mourir!

Summum nec metuas diem, nec optes:
Ce sont deux passions à craindre, mais l'une a son remede bien plus prest que l'autre" (1580).

XVIII.

Nescis, homo, hoc an illud magis expediat, an aeque utrumque. ECCL. XI.

This is an echo of the verse: Mane semina semen tuum et vespere ne cesset manus tua; quia nescis quid magis oriatur hoc aut illud et si utrumque simul melius erit.

(In the morning sow thy seed, and in the evening withhold not thine hand: for thou knowest not whether shall prosper, either this or that, or whether they both shall be alike good.)

XIX.

Homo sum, humani a me nihil alienum puto.
[Terence: *Heautontimoroumenos.*]

(I am a man; I deem nothing that is human to be foreign to me.)

See *Essais:* Liv. II. 2. "Tant sage qu'il voudra, mais enfin c'est un homme . . . il paslit à la peur, il rougit à la honte, il gemit à la cholique. . . .
Humani a se nihil alienum putet."
(Let him not deem anything, etc.) (1580.)

XX.

Ne plus sapias quam necesse est ne obstupescas.
ECCL. VII.

(Be not overwise lest thou shouldst become senseless.)

This is so frequent and fundamental a thought with Montaigne that it is not worth while to illustrate it with examples.

XXI.

Si quis existimat se aliquid scire, nondum cognovit quomodo oportet illud scire.
[Incorrectly cited from] COR. VIII.

(If any man think that he knoweth anything, he knoweth nothing yet as he ought to know.)

See the citation after the following inscription.

XXII.

Si quis existimat se aliquid esse, cum nihil sit, ipse se seducit. AD GAL. VI.

(If a man thinks himself to be something, when he is nothing, he deceiveth himself.)

See the '*Apologie*': "Que nous presche la verité . . . quand elle nous inculque si souvent que nostre sagesse n'est que folie devant Dieu; que de

toutes les vanitez la plus vaine c'est l'homme; que l'homme qui presume de son sçavoir, ne sçait pas encores que c'est que sçavoir, et que l'homme, qui n'est rien, s'il pense estre quelque chose se seduit soy mesme et se trompe? Ces sentences du sainct Esprit expriment si clairement et si vivement ce que je veux maintenir que . . . ." (1580.)

XXIII.

Ne plus sapite quam oporteat, sed sapite ad sobrietatem. ROM. XII.

(Be not wiser than may be needful, but be wise in moderation.)

See the essay '*De la Moderation*': "On peut et trop aimer la vertu, et se porter immoderément en une action juste et vertueuse. A ce biaiz s'accommode la parolle divine: 'Ne soyez plus sages qu'il ne faut: mais soyez sobrement sages'" (1580).

XXIV.

Καὶ τὸ μὲν οὖν σαφὲς οὔτις ἀνὴρ ἴδεν οὐδέ τις ἔσται εἰδώς.

[Xenophanes: cited by Diogenes Laertius and Sextus Empiricus.]

(No one has ever known the truth and no one will know it.)

XXV.

Τίς δ' οἶδεν εἰ ζῆν τοῦθ', ὃ κέκληται θανεῖν,
τὸ ζῆν δὲ θνήσκειν ἐστί;

[Euripides: fragment of the *Phrixus*:—in Stobaeus: Of the Praise of Death.]

(Who knows whether that which we call dying is living, and living is dying?)

In the '*Apologie*': "Aux plus avisez et aux plus habilles . . . la raison humaine a persuadé qu'elle n'avoit . . . ny pied ny fondement quelconque, non pas seulement pour assurer si nous vivons; comme Euripides, qui dit estre en doute si la vie que nous vivons est vie, ou si c'est ce que nous appellons mort qui soit vie: [the above verses are then quoted] (1580) et non sans apparence: car pourquoy prenons nous titre d'estre, de cet instant qui n'est qu'une eloise dans le cours infiny d'une nuict eternelle?" (1588.)

XXVI.

Res omnes sunt difficiliores quam ut eas possit homo consequi. Eccl. i.

(All things are too difficult for man to understand them.)

Derived from.—"Cunctae res difficiles, non potest eas homo explicare sermone." Eccl. i. 8.

XXVII.

Ἐπέων δὲ πολὺς νομὸς ἔνθα καὶ ἔνθα.

[Iliad. XX. 249.]

(Wide is the range of man's speech hither and thither.)

See *Essais:* Liv. I. 47. "C'est bien, ce que diet ce vers, **Ἐπέων δὲ πολὺς νομὸς ἔνθα καὶ ἔνθα.** Il y prou de loy[1] de parler, par tout et pour et contre." (1580.)

Again the *'Apologie':* "Leurs façons de parler sont: 'Je n'establis rien . . . . La loy de parler et pour et contre est pareille' " (1580).

XXVIII.

Humanum genus est avidum nimis auricularum.

[Lucretius. IV. 598.]

(The whole race of man has too greedy ears.)

XXIX.

Quantum est in rebus inane.

[Persius. I. 1.]

(How great is the worthlessness of things.)

XXX.

Per omnia vanitas. ECCL. I.

(All is vanity.)

"Vanitas vanitatum, dixit Ecclesiastes: vanitas vanitatum et omnia vanitas."

[1] "Loy," *i. e.,* permission.

XXXI.

—servare modum, finemque tenere,
Naturamque sequi . . . .

[Lucan: *Pharsalia.* II. 381-2.]

(To keep within due measure and hold fast the end and follow nature.)

See *Essais:* Liv. III. 12. "Cettuy cy [Socrates] ne se propose point des vaines fantasies: sa fin fut de nous fournir de choses et de preceptes qui réellement et plus jointement servent à la vie: *Servare modum* [etc]." (1588.)

XXXII.

Quid superbis terra et cinis? ECCL. 10.

[Ecclesiasticus. x. 9.]

(Earth and ashes, wherefore art thou proud?)

Original text: Quid *superbit* . . . .

In the *'Apologie':* "La saincte Parole declare miserables ceux d'entre nous qui s'estiment: 'Bourbe et cendre, leur dit-elle, qu'as tu à te glorifier? . . . .'" (1580.)

XXXIII.

Vae qui sapientes estis in oculis vestris! ISA. V.

(Woe unto ye that are wise in your own eyes!)

XXXIV.

Fruere jucunde praesentibus, caetera extra te.

(Enjoy pleasantly present things, others are beyond thee.)

XXXV.

Παντὶ λόγῳ λόγος ἴσος ἀντίκειται.

[Sextus Empiricus: *Hypotyposes.*]

(To every opinion an opinion of equal weight is opposed.)

See *Essais:* Liv. II. 15. "Il n'y a raison qui n'en aye une contraire, dict le plus sage party des philosophes."

XXXVI.

—*Nostra vagatur*
In tenebris, nec caeca potest mens cernere verum.

(Our mind wanders in darkness, and, blind, cannot discern the truth.)

These lines are found in one of the Epistles of the chancellor l'Hospital, one addressed—*Ad Margaritam, regis sororem.* The posthumous volume which contains it was published in 1585. This inscription must therefore either be of later date than the others may be supposed to be, or (which is not unlikely) Montaigne must have seen

a manuscript copy of the poem. This is the only inscription taken from a contemporary, and this fact corroborates the other expressions of Montaigne's high regard for the great and good Chancellor.

XXXVII.

Fecit Deus hominem similem umbrae de qua post solis occasum quis judicabit? ECCL. 7.

(God has made man like a shadow, of which who shall judge after the setting of the sun?)

This would seem to be another sentence of, perhaps, Montaigne's own making, attributed by him (as before) to "Eccl." The life of man is frequently compared to a shadow, but there is nothing in the Scriptures that corresponds to the last words of this passage. But again, Montaigne in the '*Apologie*' refers to it as in the Bible: "La saincte Parole declare miserables ceux d'entre nous qui s'estiment. Bourbe et cendre, leur dit elle, qu'as tu à te glorifier? Et ailleurs: Dieu a faict l'homme semblable à l'ombre; de laquelle qui jugera, quand par l'esloignement de la lumiére elle sera esvanouye?" (1580.)

XXXVIII.

Solum certum nihil esse certi et homine nihil miserius aut superbius.

[Pliny: *Hist. Nat.* II. 7.]

(The only certainty is that nothing is certain and nothing is more wretched or more proud than man.)

The original text is: "Solum ut inter ista certum sit, nihil esse certi, nec miserius quidquam homine, aut superbius."

Cf. *Essais:* Liv. II. 14. Montaigne is speaking of the disconnection—the break—between human reason and physical facts; whoever, he says, considers this "en tireroit à l'advanture quelque argument pour secourir ce mot hardy de Pline, '*solum certum* [etc.]'—il n'y a rien de certain que l'incertitude, et rien de plus miserable et de plus fier que l'homme" (1580).

XXXIX

Ex tot Dei operibus nihilom magis cuiquam homini incognitum quam venti vestigium.

Eccl. XI.

(Of all the works of God nothing is more unknown to any man than the track of the wind.)

There is no such text. In Ecclesiastes xi. verse 4 reads: "Qui observat ventum, non seminat: et qui considerat nubes, nunquam metet;" and possibly thinking of this suggested the fuller phrase to Montaigne.

Montaigne's inscription reminds the English reader, of course, of "The wind bloweth where it listeth, etc." (John iii. 8); but the word translated there "wind" is in the Vulgate "spiritus" and the Revised Version offers the alternative of "The Spirit breatheth . . ." which was the form used by the early French translators:—an indication that to Montaigne's mind this verse would not be associated with the wind.

XL.

Ἄλλοισιν ἄλλος θεῶν τε κ' ἀνθρώπων μέλει.

[Euripides: Hippolytus. 104.]

(Of Gods, of men, each maketh still his choice.)

XLI.

Ἐφ' ᾧ φρονεῖς μέγιστον ἀπολεῖ τοῦτό σε,
τὸ δοκεῖν τιν' εἶναι.

[Menander: fragment of the *Empipramene*;—in Stobaeus: Of Arrogance.]

(That on which you so pride yourself will be your ruin,—you who think yourself to be somebody.)

XLII.

Ταράσσει τοὺς ἀνθρώπους οὐ τὰ πράγματα ἀλλὰ τὰ περὶ τῶν πραγμάτων δόγματα.

[Epictetus: *Enchiridion*;—in Stoabeus: Of Death.]

(That which worries men is not things but that which they think about them.)

See the essay: *'Que le goust des biens et des maux depend, en bonne partie, de l'opinion que nous en avons.'* "Les hommes, dit une sentence grecque ancienne, sont tourmentez par les opinions qu'ils ont des choses, non par les choses mesmes." (1580.)

XLIII.

Καλὸν φρονεῖν τὸν θνητὸν ἀνθρώποις ἴσα.

[Sophocles: fragment of *'The Colchians'*;—in Stobaeus: Of Arrogance.]

('Tis well for a mortal to have thoughts appropriate to men: i. e. not to be overwise.)

XLIV.

—Quid aeternis minorem
Consiliis animum fatigas?

[Horace: Carm. II. 11.]

(Why with designs for the far future dost thou weary thy mind unequal to them?)

XLV.

Judicia Domini abyssus multa. PSALM 35.

[This is from the 35th Psalm in the Vulgate, the 36th in our canon. The whole verse is: Justitia tua sicut montes Dei, judicia tua abyssus multa.]

(The judgments of the Lord are a great deep.)

XLVI.

Οὐδὲν ὁρίζω.

(I determine in nothing.)

XLVII.

Οὐ καταλαμβάνω.

(I do not comprehend.)

XLVIII.

Ἐπέχω.

(I pause.)

XLIX.

Σκέπτομαι.

(I examine [consider].)

[These last four and Nos. 52, 53, 54 are from Sextus Empiricus: *Hypotyposes.*]

See the *'Apologie,'* (He is speaking of the Pyrrhonists): "Leurs façons de parler sont, 'Je n'etablis rien;' . . . . 'Je ne le comprends point;' . . . . Leur mot sacramentale, c'est ἐπέχω, c'est à dire, 'Je soustiens, je ne bouge'" (1580).

L.

More duce et sensu.

(Be led by custom and opinion.)

Cf. the essay: *De la Coustume*: "Le sage . . . quant au dehors doit suivre entierement les façons et formes receuës."

LI.

Judicio alternante.

(With alternating opinion.)

LII.

Ἀκαταληπτέω.

(I do not understand.)

LIII.

Οὐδὲν μᾶλλον.

(Nothing more.)

LIV.

Ἀῤῥεπῶς.

(Inclining to neither side.)

Cf. the '*Apologie*': "—la devise d'une balance." (1588.)

Of these 54 inscriptions 19 are nominally taken from the Bible (the greater part purporting to come from Ecclesiastes), 10 from Sextus Empiricus, 7 from Stobaeus, one each from Martial, Terence, Persius, Horace, Lucan, Lucretius, Pliny, Homer, Euripides, Erasmus, L'Hospital, and of 7 the source is uncertain.

APPENDIX

The 'Cachets' of Montaigne.

Two seals that belonged to Montaigne have been identified, one is still in existence, and one is known by his imprint on his letters.[1]

It will be remembered that in speaking of *'armoiries,'* Montaigne says: *'Je porte d'azur semé de trèfles d'or avec une patte de lion de mesme, armée de gueules, mise en fasce."*[2] One of the seals shows these arms surrounded by the Collar of St. Michael.

The second, the existing one, is much larger, and is cut on a steel cube, not easily to be used, so that it was probably intended only for important papers. It is of the same design, save that the name and title—Michel, Seigneur de Montaigne—surround the arms and the collar.

A third object,[3] found in the débris of the

[1] These were described by Dr. Payen, with illustrations, in 1856.

[2] Essais: Liv. I. 46.

[3] Described in the *Bulletin de la Société historique et archéologique de Périgord,* 1885.

château de Montaigne, is a copper medal, bearing, on the obverse the same design as the larger seal; on the reverse, a balance of which the scales are even, with the word Ἐπέχω (translated by Montaigne as we have seen above, "*Je ne bouge*"). It bears the date of 1576, and the number 42, Montaigne's age that year.[1]

This, while recalling the motto in his library, is also an illustration, as it were, of the passage in the '*Apologie*' where, speaking of doubt, he says it is better expressed by interrogation than by assertion: "*Que scay-je? voylà comme je la porte à la devise d'une balance.*"

And this '*devise*' recalls that which Sainte-Beuve proposed for Montaigne, suggested by the sentence in the essay 'De Trois Commerces': "'*Selon qu'on peut,' c'estoit le refrein et la mot favory de Socrates, mot de grande substance.*" Sainte-Beuve, declaring that there is a use in 'devices' that set forth a thought with imagination, amused himself by fancying a device for Dante, and then adds:

"Quant à Montaigne, son cachet aurait pu figurer

[1] He constantly in his books marked not only the date of the year when he read them, but his own age.

deux enfants jouant au volant sous un nuage, avec ce mot de Socrate qui a toute un physionomie traduit par lui: '*Selon qu'on peut.*' ''[1]

That Montaigne might readily have accepted this device is made evident by finding inscribed by him on two of his books the phrase: "*Mentre si puo,*" and on a third "*Mentre puoi;*" in which may be found again an expression of his conviction that it is wisdom to accept the bounds set by life and death.

[1] This is a note in the first edition of *Port-Royal* (1842), T. II. 499; it has not been reproduced in the later editions. It is quoted by M. Bonnefon: '*Montaigne,*' Bordeaux, 1893.

MONTAIGNE AS A READER AND STUDENT OF STYLE

"C'est la meilleure munition que j'aye trouvé à cet humain voyage."

Montaigne.

"Montaigne is one of the most original of authors, though he helped himself to ideas in every direction. But they turn to blood and colouring in his style, and give a freshness of complexion that is forever charming."

Lowell.

MONTAIGNE AS A READER AND STUDENT OF STYLE[1]

From his earliest youth Montaigne was a reader of the classics; and it is a matter for interesting consideration why his own style was so much the opposite of the classical. The force of his personality is shown in the choice of his native language to write in, and in the creation of a form of his vernacular so peculiarly his own, so unlike that of his contemporaries, that in any difficult passage very little light is thrown on his meaning by the study of their writings.

That this originality of expression was a conscious pleasure to him is unquestionable. He says that when he talked Italian in Italy it was all very well for common conversations, but "in more vigorous discourse—*aux propos roides*—I should not have dared to trust to an idiom that I could not twist and turn from its usual path. I

[1] The facts contained in the following paper have been drawn from the editions of 1580, 1588 and 1595, though I have had occasion to refer two or three times to that of 1582.

must be able to add to the words something personal."[1] It is this "something personal"—*quelque chose du mien*—which is the distinctive mark of "style," and no writer ever possessed it more completely than Montaigne.

Montaigne's friends wrote familiar letters in Latin, and all wrote Latin poems; but Montaigne, to whom the Latin tongue was as his native tongue, left behind him no Latin line. French, Gascon, he was to the core; and what he was at heart, that, in all things, he was externally.

But his French brains were fed on the Latin authors, and it is an interesting investigation, which we are curiously able to follow out, what classical authors most interested him, and at what periods of his life he chiefly read their respective works.

Some years ago a writer on Montaigne questioned:

"Vers quels livres Montaigne se sentait-il guidé par ses preférences? Certes, il importerait grandement à l'histoire des Essais de pouvoir déterminer quelles furent, en ces années, les lectures de leur auteur, quelles pouvaient

[1] Essais: Liv. III. 5.

être les sources auxquelles il allait puiser le plus volontiers."[1]

It did not occur to him how his question may be in some degree answered. It would indeed be rash to affirm too much in the matter; but we can come to some interesting conclusions by examining in the two principal editions of the Essays published during his life-time, and in the posthumous edition, Montaigne's quotations, and what may be called his "sources." We discover that evidently before 1580 certain authors were most familiar to him; between 1580 and 1588 certain others; after 1588 still another set. Passages in the Essays confirm these conclusions; which are of importance because the discovery of the dates at which he assimilated the thoughts of this or that author is of assistance in the study of the development of his genius. The results reached will be found at the end of this paper, thrown into tabular form.

Ovid was his first literary pleasure and then

[1] *Montaigne. L'Homme et l'Œuvre*: par Paul Bonnefon, Bordeaux, 1893.

the Aeneid and Terence,[1] Plautus and the Italian comedies.

In later days "the good Ovid" lost his charm for Montaigne as he has done in great degree for the world at large; Montaigne's phrase can be generalized: "his facility and invention that used to enrapture, interest but little now-a-days." But when Dante in Limbo led by Vergil, meets Homer, "the sovereign poet," behind him followed Ovid with Horace and Lucan. Montaigne's five "*altissimi*" (Latin) poets were Vergil,[2] Lucretius, Catullus, Horace, and somewhat below these, Lucan.

He quotes often from Catullus (in 1588). One long quotation he makes his own by his use of it, altering it to suit his needs. It is from the poet's touching lament for his dead brother; which in the essay '*De l'Amitié*,' Montaigne adopts, expressing in the beautiful and befitting words of

[1] His admiration of Terence led him into an odd critical error. He firmly believed that it was Scipio and Laelius who wrote these comedies, and not "un serf afriquain," "et on me feroit desplaisir de me desloger de cette creance."

[2] On the title-page of Montaigne's copy of Vergil (a Venice octavo of 1539) is written in his own hand: Michael Montanus me possidet, anno D. 1549, aetatis prope 15. cal. januarii, venundatur 44 s., cum indice Erythraei.

the "tenderest of poets, nineteen hundred years ago" his feeling for his dead friend, La Boétie.

Montaigne does not mention Tibullus and Propertius, but he quotes from Propertius almost as often as from Catullus (exclusively in 1588) and from Tibullus some five or six times (chiefly in 1588).

Montaigne's love of poetry—*"la poësie que j'ayme d'une particulière inclination. . . . . Dez ma première enfance la poësie a cela de me transpercer et transporter"*[1]—this delight was equalled by his interest in history. History he styles his *"gibier en matière de livres,"* and it was by the means of histories—chiefly in the form of biographies—that, in his own phrase, he associated with *"ces grandes ames des meilleurs siecles."* Of all historians Plutarch was most prized by him. Plutarch's moral works also he valued even more highly; these, and those of Seneca were the meat and bread of his intellectual life; but the poets were his wine, and, as Sainte-Beuve has said: *"Nul écrivain en francais, y compris les poètes*

[1] Essais: *De l'institution des enfans.*

proprement dits, n'a eu de la poësie une aussi haute idée que lui."

Never were poets more warmly praised than by him in his ardent enthusiasm over the words of Vergil and Lucretius and Horace. "These good people needed no accidental brilliancy and subtlety; their language is full and rich with a natural and unfailing strength; they are wholly 'epigram' (i. e. point throughout); not in the tail merely, but in the head and the stomach and the feet. There is nothing forced and nothing that drags, the whole moves with the same step. Yet it is not a gentle eloquence and merely blameless: it is sinewy and vigorous, and it does not please so much as it takes possession and ravishes; and it ravishes most the strongest minds. When I see these noble forms of expression, so vivid, so weighty, I do not call it well said, I call it well thought. It is the animation of the imagination that lifts and dilates the words . . . ." He continues, "Such painting is produced not so much by dexterity of hand as because the object is more vividly perceived by the soul. Gallus speaks simply because he conceives simply: Horace does

not content himself with a superficial expression, it would be a treachery to his thought; he sees into things more clearly and farther; his wit picks the lock of and rummages in (*crochette et furette*) the whole store of words and tropes to clothe itself: and he needs them to be beyond the common as his conception is beyond the common . . . the sense illuminates and produces words not of air, but of flesh and blood: they signify more than they say."[1]

Montaigne was an enthusiastic admirer of some of the French poetry of his own day—and little other French poetry was known at that moment even to Frenchmen. The great mediaeval poems, the Chanson de Roland and the other Chansons de geste, were then accessible only in very inferior prose renderings that could have possessed little interest for Montaigne. Neither was the Roman de la Rose, which had been brought into notice by Marot, of a nature to attract him. He does not speak of Villon and Charles d'Orléans; and indeed he refers to no French poet of earlier date than "*le bon Marot.*"

[1] Essais: Liv. III. 9.

His book-shelves[1] contained the works of Italian poets, and of two—not the most famous two—he speaks; of Ariosto, who died the year Montaigne was born, and of Tasso, whose birth was ten years later.

He refers, not by name, to Tasso, who was then living—in the '*Apologie de Raimond Sebond*,' in a passage added in 1588, expressing great grief for his piteous condition, and saying he had seen him at Ferrara,—"*survivant à soy-mesmes.*" It seems to have been during his visit to Italy in 1581 that his attention was attracted to Tasso, for there is nothing of him in the edition of 1580, spite of the poet's visit to France in 1571, and the publication of the '*Gerusalemme Liberata*' in 1575. In the later editions Montaigne quotes from the great poem half a dozen times and from the '*Aminta*' once, and gives high praise to their author.[2]

The name of Dante does not occur anywhere in Montaigne's writings, but he twice quotes from

[1] It is to be remembered that a large number of his books were a legacy from La Boétie.

[2] He refers, too, to a passage in Tasso's '*Paragone dell' Italia alla Francia.*'

him; once from the Inferno, and once from the Purgatorio, both in 1582.[1]

Petrarch he quotes four or five times.

He was familiar not only with Italian poets, but also with some prose writers of Italy. He tells us in the essay '*Des Livres,*' of reading Guicciardini some ten years earlier (reading it, that is, before 1570), and he gives us the excellent comment he wrote on the fly-leaf. He found much to admire in it, but the historian's "digressions and discourses" were wearisome to him (as were similar passages in other authors): and he did not like the moral tone: the attributing nothing to the action of virtue, religion and conscience, "*comme si ces parties là estoyent du tout* [i. e. *entièrement*] *esteintes au monde.*"

He refers twice to '*Le Courtisan*'—the '*Il Cortegiano*' of Baldassare Castiglione.[2] And in one of

[1] The edition of Dante that may have been in Montaigne's Library was the small octavo published at Lyons in 1571. (This volume consequently could not have belonged to La Boétie.) His Petrarch was precisely similar, being issued by the same publisher twenty years earlier, 1550.

[2] This book may have been one of those left to him by La Boétie. There is a pretty sonnet of La Boétie about a copy given him by her whom he loved, beginning:

"J'ay un livre Thuscan, dont la tranche est garnie

these instances he makes a droll mistake (which has hitherto escaped notice) from ignorance of Italian. It is in the essay *'Des Destriers.'* In speaking of riding on mules, he remarks: "*Le Courtisan dit qu'avant son temps c'estoit reproche à un gentilhomme d'en chevaucher.*" (1595.) The passage he had in mind reads, "*E dicono, non convenirsi ai giovani passeggiar par la città à cavallo, massimamente nelle mule:* [that is, in slippers.]"

He mentions Cardinal Bembo[1] and the Platonist Ficino and the amiable scholar Equicola as being too artificial for his taste; Aretino, he thought little deserved his title of *'Il Divino'* and Boccaccio's *Decameron* he classed among merely "pleasant" books. (Under the same head he places Rabelais.)[2]

> Richment d'or battu de l'une et l'autre part;
> Le dessus reluit d'or; et au dedans est l'art
> Du comte Balthasar, de la Cortisanie."

[1] Montaigne's secretary reports that at Padua, "Il y regarda de bon œil le visage du Cardinal Bembo, qui montre la douceur de ses mœurs, et je ne sçay quoy de la jantillesse de son esprit."

[2] It is somewhat strange that he makes no mention of Spanish books, which he says (Liv. II. 2) his father was much in the habit of quoting in conversation; while his mother

Italian literature, in fine, did not answer to his demand for simplicity and strength. He found these qualities in the poetry of the people of his own country, in their ballads and folk-songs. Ampère has remarked that the phrase *"la poésie populaire"* is used by Montaigne for the first time in French letters. The thing was as unknown in literature as the phrase, and Montaigne's appreciation of it is remarkable.

He says: "The entirely natural poetry of the people—*la poësie populaire*—has simplicities and graces by which it rivals the main beauty of poetry wrought according to the rules of art; as may be seen in the *'villanelles'* of Gascony, and in the songs that are brought to us from nations that have no knowledge of learning, nor even the use of writing."[1] He here evidently refers to the songs he has quoted in an earlier essay—that

was (probably) of Spanish descent. He had among his books a copy of the 12th Book of the 'Amadis of Gaul' in Spanish. It has come down to our day, and has been the glory of successive collectors, being a very rare edition. Montaigne, rather oddly, wrote above the title, *"Libre espagnol;"* his signature (as was usual with him) is below the title.

[1] Essais: Liv. I. 54.

(so-called) on Cannibals,—songs which, as he says, do not 'smell' of savagery and of which "sometimes the imagery is quite anacreontic." They are songs of the natives of South America; one the defiance of a prisoner, taken in battle, to his executioners, the other a love song; and that a lover of the gaiety of the *"bon homme"* Anacreon should perceive the anacreontic character of these rude rhythms, and a student of *le beau poète* Lucretius be charmed by the *villanelles* of his native province, is indeed a proof of fine and wide intellectual appreciation.

The romantic element in French poetry became almost extinct in the 16th century; the poets began to endeavor after truth to life. In the exact middle of the century appeared the manifesto of the *Pléiade*—the seven poets who under the leadership of Ronsard and Du Bellay strove eagerly, but blindly, to attain the impossible end of an artificial naturalness. Fighting against the classicists, they were yet themselves so imbued with classicism that in our days, except in a few lovely verses, it is the artificial side of their work that is chiefly obvious: but to Montaigne the classicism and the naturalness were equally delightful, and

in a memorable passage he says he thinks the poets of his day "have lifted poetry to the highest point it can attain," adding: "In those qualities in which Ronsard and Du Bellay excel, I find them not distant from the perfection of the ancients."[1]

"In those qualities in which they excel;"—the phrase is characteristic of Montaigne's mode of criticism. In all things "*Distinguo,*" as he himself says, is the most generally applicable phrase of his logic, the chief premise of his thought; and his ability as a critic lies in the discrimination of the quality in which a writer excels; while he is not often more humorous than when he ridicules the lack in others of this power of literary insight.

"If they judge in general phrases, 'This is good, that is not so,' and they happen to hit right, you can see well that fortune has directed their aim; let them define and limit their sentence a little, saying why or how it is so. These general judgments that I see to be so common, say noth-

[1] Essais: Liv. II. 17. He quotes fifteen lines from Ronsard (in the '*Apologie*') about "le beau, le grand soleil;" and in the same essay are three Latin lines addressed to Ronsard, and published in his works.

ing; they are like those personages who bow to a throng of people in a crowd together; those who have good knowledge of these people, bow to one or another individual, and recognize him by name and in particular; but it is a risky thing to venture on; and I have seen it happen, oftener than every day, that weak understandings trying to appear intelligent by remarking, when reading some work, on the point of beauty, fix their admiration with so poor a choice that instead of showing us the excellence of the author, they show us their own ignorance. This exclamation is safe, 'How beautiful that is!' after hearing a whole page of Vergil; and that is the shift by which dexterous people save themselves; but to undertake to follow closely, and with skilled and tested judgment to try to observe where a good author surpasses himself, weighing his words, his phrases, his conceptions and his various powers one after another,—do not venture on that—*ostez vous de là.* That's not for you."

Montaigne when he had finished reading a book sometimes wrote in the volume remarks on the character of the work;—*"le jugement que j'ai en retiré en gros."* But this phrase of his does

not precisely describe these annotations—for, as he says elsewhere, echoing the passage just quoted *"touts jugements en gros sont lasches et imparfaits"*—and these literary judgments of his—some of which he has transcribed in the essay *Des Livres,*—short as they are, are neither feeble nor, in a sense, incomplete. Their vigour and their adequacy is due to his having seen and pointed out "the qualities in which each writer excels."

One of the most delicate pieces of work of this kind is at the end of the essay on the younger Cato, where Montaigne compares together *"fait lutter ensemble,"* five lines of five of the great Latin poets, and does it with great felicity of phrase and fineness of perception.[1]

With the remembrance of this passage in the mind it is somewhat surprising and confusing to one not familiar with the diversity of Montaigne's thoughts on one and the same subject, to come across in the essay on *'De trois commerces,'* his courteous handing over of poetry to women as a suitable occupation for them, "it being a gay and subtle art, masked in unrealities, abounding in

[1] Essais : Liv. III. 8.

words, all pleasure, all outward show, like themselves."

But when he wrote thus, Montaigne had just been reading Plato, and it is the platonic view of poetry that he expresses. The description he gives of it here also connects itself with what he says elsewhere of the vain and frivolous subtleties of those Greek poets who composed whole works with lines beginning with one and the same letter, or who fashioned with the measure of their verses, eggs, balls, wings, or hatchets.

Taking yet another point of view, it is still in sympathy with Plato that he quotes him as saying that it is to no purpose for a sober-minded man, *"un homme rassis"* to knock at the door of poetry.[1]

Again his thought makes a turn and he speaks of "the thousand poets who slowly and stumblingly drag themselves prosaically along."[2] He contrasts their work with "the best prose of the ancients, which is brilliant throughout with poetic strength and boldness, and shows forth something

[1] Essais: Liv. II. 2.
[2] Id.: Liv. III. 9.

of poetic madness," recurring to the idea that the poetic mood is "a fine frenzy."

The feeling he expresses here regarding prosaic poetry and poetic prose, indicates the separation he makes between poetic substance and poetic form. He even goes so far as to say "I am not with those who think that good rhythm makes a good poem; let the author make a short syllable long if he will; that's no matter, *non force;* if the conceptions are charming, if wit and judgment have well played their part, here is a good poet I say, but a bad versifier . . . I do not say," he concludes, "but that it is an admirable and excellent thing to express oneself well, but not so excellent as it is made out to be; and I am vexed that our life busies itself entirely in that."[1] He refers in this same passage to Menander, who declared he had 'composed' a comedy before he had put it in verse, "because having the subject and the way of treating it arranged in his mind, he counted as little the words and the measures of the work, which are in truth of small importance in comparison with the other part." And as illustrative of this, Montaigne alleges the fact that "since

[1] Essais: *De l'institution des enfans.*

Ronsard and Du Bellay have brought our French poetry into favour, I see no little poetaster that does not emphasize his words and harmonize his cadences almost as well as they. In the eyes of the vulgar there were never so many poets; but though it has been very easy for them to copy the rhythms of their masters, they are very far from imitating the rich descriptions of the one and the delicate conceptions of the other." Montaigne follows his own precepts here. He does not vaguely say that the little poets have not succeeded in imitating the 'merits' of the greater poets; but he says they have not succeeded in imitating "the rich descriptions" of Ronsard and "the delicate conceptions" of Du Bellay—terms that precisely indicate their respective merits.

Elsewhere he exclaims: "This is a wonder, we have many more poets than judges and interpreters of poetry; it is easier to create it than to know what it is."[1] In the same tone he continues: "A certain low kind of poetry can be judged by precepts and by rules of art, but good poetry, that which is supreme, divine, is above rules and reasons. He who looks at its beauty with steady and

[1] Essais: *Du jeune Caton.*

fixed gaze (the same word that he used before, "une veue *rassise*") sees no more than the splendor of a flash of lightning; it does not familiarize our judgment with itself; it at once enchants us and overwhelms us." And with a reminiscence of a passage in Plato's Ion, he goes on: "The frenzy that spurs him who has entered into the spirit of it, is communicated to another in hearing him talk of it and recite it; as the magnet not only attracts a needle, but infuses into that needle its quality of attracting others; and it can be clearly seen at the theatre that the sacred inspiration of the Muses, having first roused the poet to anger, grief, hatred or what they will, carrying him out of himself, is communicated by the poet to the actor, and by the actor in turn to the whole people; it is as the connection of our needles, hanging one to another."

This passage occurs in one of the earlier essays, but it was not inserted in the essay till the posthumous edition; and this fact is indicated to a student of Montaigne from the reminiscence in it of Plato, for it is apparent from the different texts that Montaigne read Plato carefully only in his last years.

There would almost seem to have been in Montaigne's mind a touch of mysticism in his conception of the connection between the poet and his creation, as if he felt the poet to be literally inspired; but when carefully considered, his words only imply that however great the artist—in whatever art—that which may be called inspiration, but which Montaigne called fortune, obscurely aids him; he does not always himself know how he has achieved his success. It is not by his own force of wing, but on the back of Pegasus that he has soared aloft. Montaigne says: "Those poetic flights that carry away their author and snatch him out of himself, why should we not attribute them to good hap, since he himself confesses that they surpass his ability and his powers, and recognizes that they come from elsewhere than from himself, and that they are no wise under his control; just as orators declare not to be under their control those unlooked for emotions and excitements that urge them beyond their purpose. It is the same with painting: from the hand of the painter there sometimes escape lines surpassing his intention and his knowledge, which excite his own admiration

and which startle him. But fortune shows still more clearly the part she has in all works of this kind by the graces and beauties that are to be found in them not only without the intention but even without the knowledge of the workman: a capable reader (*un suffisant lecteur*) often discovers in another man's writings, perfections different from those which the author has consciously put into his work and has perceived, the reader endowing it with richer meanings and more beautiful aspects."[1]

It would be easy for the careless thinker to give a touch of ridicule to this, and to be reminded by it of the immortal scene of Molière, where *'les femmes savantes'* beseech the creator of the admirable phrase *"quoi qu'on die"* to confess whether when he uttered it he felt himself all its energy; whether he dreamed of all it says to us; whether he perceived all its wit. But men of genius have themselves borne frequent testimony to the truth of this conception. Another passage in the Essays, written much later than the foregoing one, a 1595 passage, is like an echo of this, and he speaks again of what may be read in a book more than

[1] Essais: *Divers evenements de mesme conseil.*

the author has put into it.[1] Elsewhere, too, he says:[2] "The work by its own force and fortune has the power to aid the workman and carry him beyond his conceptions and knowledge."[3]

This is precisely Emerson's thought in the familiar couplet:

> "He builded better than he knew:
> The conscious stone to beauty grew."

With the Greek poets Montaigne shows no familiarity. He was not versed in the Greek language and though good Latin translations of the dramatists were made in the middle of the century, he does not seem to have been acquainted with them, nor with the few French translations, which were very imperfect. A Greek Anthology he owned is still in existence. He quotes Euripides once through Plato (or Diogenes Laertius) and Sophocles once, both in 1580.

[1] Essais: *De l'institution des enfans.*

[2] Id.: Liv. III. 8.

[3] Jowett has said in his Introduction to the Symposium: "It may be truly thought to contain more than any commentator has ever dreamed of: or as Goethe said of one of his own writings, more than the author himself knew. For . . . glimpses of the future may often be conveyed in words which could hardly have been understood or interpreted at the time when they were uttered."

He mentions Homer more than twenty times, an indication of how the poet's fame was resounding through the air, and in the essay '*Des plus excellents hommes,*' that is (in the Latin sense), the most eminent men, he places Homer highest of the three whom he held to be above all others; the other two being Alexander the Great and Epaminondas. Homer is highest not because of his learning, not even, possibly, because of his art, though even Vergil in that is perhaps not comparable to him: "I leave those to judge of this who know them both," Montaigne says. *"Moy qui n'en connay que l'un, puis seulement dire cela, selon ma portée, que je ne croy pas que les Muses mesmes allassent au delà du Romain."* Homer is highest because though blind and indigent, with few or no guides in the world of intellect, he had such knowledge of government, war, religion and philosophy and of the arts that his books are as *"une pepiniere de toute sorte de suffisance."* Montaigne quotes his praises from Horace, Ovid, Lucretius and Manilius, adding the splendid encomium from Aristotle's Poetics; and he exclaims: *"Quelle gloire se peut comparer à la sienne? Il n'est rien qui vive en la*

bouche des hommes comme son nom et ses ouvrages."

He quotes from Plato a story taken from Homer, evidently not recognizing its source.[1] And he quotes a line from the Iliad[2], which he also chose for one of the mottoes in his Library; but which he probably took from some Florilegium.

He seems to have read, late in life, in some translation, the Odyssey at least; for there are five passages openly derived from it; four of them in 1595, one in 1588,[3] and without mention of the source, another in 1588.[4]

[1] Essais: *De la Moderation.*

[2] Id.: Liv. I. 47.

[3] This passage is in the essay *'De la Vanité,'* and indicates that Montaigne did not accurately remember what he refers to. In speaking of the effect of 'unexpectedness' he says: "Or nous monstre assez Homere combien la surprise donne d'avantage, qui faict Ulysse pleurant de la mort de son chien, et ne pleurant point des pleurs de sa mere; le premier accident, tout legier qu'il estoit, l'emporta, d'autant qu'il en fut inopinéement assailly; il soustint le second, plus impetueux, parce qu'il y estoit preparé." But Homer narrated: "Anon came up the soul of my mother. . . . . At the sight of her I wept and was moved with compassion."—The above passage of the Essay was suppressed in the edition of 1595.

[4] M. Bonnefon states that Montaigne's copy of the Odyssey, which has now disappeared, was in the Library of the

The Greek philosophers and historians he knew fairly well. Plato, probably, through the Latin translation of Ficino, which is pronounced in Smith's Dictionary of Greek Biography to be "so extremely close that it has almost the authority of a Greek manuscript. His acquaintance with Aristotle was, in part, through the translation of Loys le Roy (in French).[1] Of Xenophon he possessed a copy (now in the Bibliothèque Nationale) of the Latin translation of all his works made by

elder Mirabeau, and when that was sold, in 1792, this volume brought 6 livres 3 sols; and that the margins were covered with Montaigne's notes. If this last fact be correct it indicates more knowledge of Greek on Montaigne's part than there is any other evidence of. But it seems questionable, for two reasons; the one that if he were so familiar with the poem, he would have been likely to quote it in the original; the other that while seventy-six (or more) volumes, now in different collections, are recognized as having belonged to Montaigne, only three (all histories) have marginal notes. Four or five of the other volumes have criticisms on the fly leaves, where he often made remarks.

[1] His use of the translation of *"Les Politiques"* of Aristotle by Loys le Roy (better known as 'Regius') published in 1568, is made evident by the fact (which has not hitherto been remarked) that the following sentence (from the essay *'De la præsumption'*) is to be found in the *'exposition'* by Loys le Roy of Liv. I. 3 (of the *'Politiques'*), *"Les Aethiopes et les Indiens, dit Aristote, elisants leurs roys et magistrats, avoient esgard à la beauté et procerité des personnes."*

several scholars, and edited by Sebastion Castellion,[1] published in 1551. It was apparently not satisfactory to him, as he expressed a desire that Amyot should render Xenophon in French. He may also have owned a Latin translation made by Henry Estienne, published in 1560.

He propably knew Diogenes Laertius, one of his favorite authors, through the Latin translation of Henri Estienne, published in 1570, which is said to be very much of a paraphrase.

It was to Amyot that he owed the knowledge of Plutarch he valued so highly: *"Nous autres ignorans estions perdus, si ce livre ne nous eust relevez du bourbier . . . . c'est nostre breviaire"* he wrote in or before 1580.

Montaigne was twenty-six years old when Amyot's version of the Lives appeared (1559). It was at the time when he enjoyed the short-lived happiness of La Boétie's friendship, and one

[1] The reader will recall Montaigne's touching reference to Castellion (he calls him Castalio) in the essay, *'D'un defaut do nos polices.'* The Bibliothèque Nationale also possesses Montaigne's copy of a work by Lilius Gregorius Giraldus—the other *"tres-excellent personage"* mentioned in the same passage—*'De Deis gentium varia historia . . . .* 1548.'

likes to imagine La Boétie and Montaigne reading together these admirable pages.[1]

In the twenty years that elapsed between the publication of Amyot's Plutarch,—the Lives—and the first publication of the Essays, Montaigne must have 'talked' with Plutarch, one would think, almost daily, for in the 1580 edition there are 182 passages derived from him. During the next eight years his interest in him continued, and in the 1588 edition 123 new passages are added; but after this, he was more occupied with other authors, and in 1595 but eighteen additional passages are derived from Plutarch.

Montaigne was, it would seem, even more interested by Plutarch's moral treatises than by his Lives. Considerably more than half of the borrowings are from these 'Essays' of his predecessor, though they were not translated by Aymot till 1572.

Another Greek whom Montaigne esteemed highly was Æsop; *"auteur de tres-rare excellence*

[1] La Boétie himself translated from the Greek Plutarch's 'Rules of Marriage,' and it is an interesting study of 16th century French to compare his translation with that of Amyot.

et duquel peu de gens descouvrent toutes les graces." In 1580 he borrowed the story of one of his fables in the essay '*De la Ressemblance des enfans aux peres,*' and added another to the same essay in 1588.

Montaigne's study of Plato is one of the most interesting points about his readings. His admiration for Socrates was ardent; admiration for his character,—"*on a dequoy, et ne doibt on jamais se lasser de presenter l'image de ce personnage à tous exemples et formes de perfection;*"[1] admiration for his opinions;—"*c'est luy qui ramena du ciel, où elle perdoit son temps, la sagesse humaine, pour la rendre à l'homme, où est sa plus juste et plus laborieuse besoigne;*"[2] admiration for his method, "*c'est grand cas,*" he says, "*d'avoir peu donner tel ordre aux pures imaginations d'un enfant, que sans les alterer ou les estirer, il en ait produict les plus beaux effects de nostre ame.*"[3] He attributes to him "*les*

[1] Essais: Liv. III. 13.

[2] Id.: Liv. III. 12. "Toutes proportions gardées, Montaigne n'accomplit-il pas, en son temps, une œuvre semblable?" Felix Hémon.

[3] Id.: Liv. III. 11. This phrase has never been properly translated, and is often misunderstood. 'Pur' placed

plus hautes et vigoureuses creances, actions et moeurs qui furent onques." He rejoiced that "the man most worthy to be known and to be set before the world as an example, is he of whom we have most certain knowledge." *"Il a esté eclairé par les plus clair voyans hommes qui furent onques."*

Yet it is apparent (see Tables) that he was not familiar with "the image of the discourses of Socrates that his friends have left us"[1] till (comparatively) late in life. He had not apparently read Xenophon's *Memorabilia* till after 1580, he had not read Plato till after 1588.

In the edition of 1580, he speaks of Socrates, with one exception, only in a general and hearsay

before the substantive or the adjective had the adverbial signification of 'purement,' 'uniquement,' 'exclusivement'; and as the distinction between the adjective and the adverb was not yet complete, the adverb sometimes was in agreement with the substantive or adjective it qualified; so that in English this may be translated: "It is a great thing to have been able so to order conceptions of child-like simplicity, as without weakening or straining them to derive from them the most excellent attainments of the soul."

[1] Essais: Liv. III. 12.

manner, with references derived from Plutarch and Seneca.[1]

The exception is in Liv. II. 11, where, when discoursing on virtue, and declaring that she asks a rough and thorny road, that she must have difficulties, either without or within, to combat, he suddenly pauses, and remarks: "I've come thus far quite at my ease; but just here it enters my mind that the soul of Socrates, which is the most perfect of which I have knowledge, would be according to my statements a soul little to be commended, for I cannot conceive in this personage any force of vicious desire;"[2] and he continues to bestow on him magnificent praise, and consequently to change the line of his argument.

Several passages in 1580 show that he had

[1] The fact is strange that though he knew Diogenes Laertius before this time, and afterward made use of his account of Socrates, there is no allusion to it in 1580.

[2] It is an illustration of the inconsecutiveness of Montaigne's method of writing, not his method of thought, of his habit of bringing together under the same head thoughts that belong to different moments of his mind, that later in this same essay there is a paragraph taken from Cicero, saying that Socrates acknowledged that his natural propensity was toward vice, but that he had corrected it by philosophy. It is not untruly that (again in this same essay), the author tells us: "C'est ici un fagotage de pieces décousues."

already been deeply moved by the story of the death of Socrates and in the edition of 1588, he gives—but perhaps not taken from the original source—a paraphrase of part of the 'Apology,' much enlarged in 1595.[1]

In 1580 (or probably some years earlier) Montaigne wrote: *"m'estre rongé les ongles à l'estude de Platon ou d'Aristote . . . . je ne l'ay jamais faict."* We may be sure this was true, not only then but all his life. None the less he studied them.

The edition of 1595 is full of Plato. About a hundred passages are derived from him, most of them avowedly (while only half as many are in the earlier editions), and a fuller knowledge than before of the teachings of Socrates is evident. It is a singular fact that at no time, not even when he was reading Plato, is there any reference to the Crito.

But in examining these passages it becomes apparent that he read Plato not so much in his greatest works, not so much for the purpose of studying the thoughts of Plato in general, as to

[1] He mentions Socrates 17 times in 1580; once in 1582; 21 times in 1588; 58 times in 1595; in all, 97 times.

learn the thoughts of Plato about the subjects of his own thoughts, and especially of those of his own thoughts which were not quite clear to himself.

The mind of Montaigne was constantly considering Law—Human Law, the Laws, their sources, their foundations, their authority, their justice, and it is Plato's treatise on The Laws that he oftenest refers to; discussing Plato's views, and refuting them or confirming them, not at length, but often merely by the manner of the reference, —a word, an epithet, a half-phrase signifying Montaigne's own point of view.

Next in frequency of reference comes The Republic, the study of the kindred subject of Justice; and then the obscure and difficult Timaeus, of which Montaigne notes the simpler parts, sometimes putting them rather disrespectfully side by side with the blunderings of other philosophers.[1]

[1] One Platonic passage gives occasion for special comment. In the '*Apologie*' Montaigne says (in an addition of 1595): "Ay-je pas veu en Platon ce divin mot 'que nature n'est rien qu'une poësie ainigmatique'?" There is no such "divin mot" in Plato; but the author of the 2nd Alcibiades (now not believed to be Plato), remarks "All poetry is in its nature enigmatic and it is not given to all men to seize the

Earlier than Plato, Lucretius was well known to Montaigne. He says little of him, but he quotes him so frequently, more than fifty times in the edition of 1580 and nearly twice as many in that of 1588, and he quotes him with such noticeable appropriateness, as if finding necessary the words of the great poet-philosopher to express the thoughts in his own mind, that there is abundant evidence that he was deeply impressed by him.

There is a singular interest in studying the great Lucretian passage in the essay, '*Que philosopher c'est apprendre à mourir.*' The conception of Nature addressing Man may have been 'caught'

sense of it." (*ἔστι τε γὰρ φύσει ποιητικὴ ἡ ξύμπασα αἰνιγματώδης, καὶ οὐ τοῦ προστυχόντος ἀνδρὸς γνωρίσαι·*) The commentators of Montaigne have noted that he mistranslated these words, but have not observed how it happened. Reading the sentence not in the original but in the translation of Ficino, which is as follows: "Est enim ipsa natura universa poësis aenigmatum plena, nec quivis eam dignoscit," he took 'natura' as in the nominative not the ablative case, and found his "divin mot." It is extremely unlikely, almost impossible, that he should have done this had he read the sentence with its context. It is therefore another proof (of which there are many) of his use of a Florilegium. "Tel allegue Platon et Homere qui ne les veid onques; et moy, ay prins des lieux [*i. e.*, des citations] assez ailleurs qu'en leur source." Essais: Liv. III. 12.

from the Roman, but in the edition of 1580 it is not in Latin that she speaks. Both words and thoughts are other than those of Lucretius, yet, it may be declared, not less noble. The last sentence of each writer marks the difference in tone of the two passages. *"Voylà les bons advertissemens de nostre mere nature,"* says the genial modern moralist.

"Quid respondemus, nisi justam intendere litem.

"Naturam, et veram verbis exponere causam?" questions the stern ancient.

But in the edition of 1588 there are additions to this passage in quotations from Lucretius that change and injure it. The poet is quoted twelve times in four pages and in connection with almost every quotation is a paraphrase of other words of his. The whole passage has become almost a *pastiche*. Montaigne's appreciation for the old master has caused him greatly to deface his own work.

There were in all 146 quotations from Lucretius in the edition of 1588 (including those of 1580). In 1595 there was one—and only one—added. Montaigne had passed from Lucretius to Plato.

The historians came next to the poets in Mon-

taigne's regard. "Well it is, always," he says, "and useful to listen to them, for they furnish us an abundance of noble and praiseworthy teachings from the magazine of their memory: of great avail, certainly, for the assistance of life,—*au secours de la vie;*" and he calls history "the anatomy of philosophy by which the most hidden parts of our nature are laid bare."[1]

Of all the historians whom he knew Montaigne ranked Caesar highest. In his copy of the '*Commentaries*'[2] he wrote the following judgment:

"Somme, c'est César un des plus grands miracles de Nature. Si elle eut voulu menager ses faveurs elle en eut bien faict deux pieces admirables. Le plus disert, le plus net et le plus sincere historien qui fut jamais, car en cette partie il n'en est nul romain qui lui soit comparable; et suis tres aise que Cicero le juge de même; —et le chef de guerre en toutes considerations des plus grands qu'elle fit jamais. Quand je considere la grandeur incomparable de cette ame j'excuse la victoire de ne s'estre peu defaire de lui, voire en cette tres injuste et tres inique cause."

[1] Essais: *De l'institution des enfans.*

[2] This copy is now at Chantilly. Montaigne was in the habit of noting in his volumes the dates when he began and when he ended reading them. He was five months about this;—from the 25 February to the 21 July, 1578;—two years before the first edition of the Essays.

He continues on for still two or three pages with more detailed comments, some of which—as well as the last sentence quoted—he afterwards transplanted into the Essays.

There he writes: "Caesar alone seems to me to deserve to be studied not merely for the science of war, but for himself, so far above all the others, though Sallust be of the number, is he in perfection and excellence."[1] Bacon was of the same mind: "His history, and those few letters of his which we have . . . . excel all men's else."[2] Montaigne continues: "Truly I read this author with a little more reverence and respect than other human works are read; sometimes considering him by himself in his actions, and the miracle of his greatness, sometimes the purity and inimitable polish of his language." (1580.)

Sallust, of whom he speaks in the foregoing quotation, he used but little. He elsewhere[3] again compares him to Caesar (in 1580), in the matter of style, and he quotes from him two or three times (all in 1595).

[1] Essais: Liv. II. 10.
[2] *Advancement of Learning*: III. iii. 4.
[3] Essais: Liv. II. 17.

Suetonius was often in his hand, especially before 1580, and especially the Life of Caesar.

Livy and Nepos he did not make much use of till after 1588. His opinion and use of Tacitus will be found set forth in the Table of Readings.

He borrows from Thucydides three times; once in 1588; twice in 1595. It is somewhat surprising that we find no more sign of interest in this great writer, since a readable translation (the first into French) was made by Claude de Seyssel, bishop of Marseilles, and published in 1527.

He made some use of the twelfth century writer, Zonoras, whose 'Annals' in three folio volumes were published at Basle in 1557.[1]

There were many French historians in Montaigne's day, or a little earlier; "never were there so many," he declares,[2] and many of them he read. He refers to Jean Bouchet and cites his *'Annales d'Aquitaine'* (published in 1531), but

[1] Montaigne does not mention his name nor his work, but Coste pointed out that in the essay *'De la Peur,'* the close of the passage about the emperor Theophilus, is taken word for word from a translation of Zonaras by J. Millet; and that Montaigne follows him again, not so closely, in what he says of the emperor Julian, Liv. II. 21.

[2] Essais: Liv. III. 8.

not with much respect: "*—passe: son credit n'est pas assez grand pour nous oster la licence d'y contredire.*"[1]

The copy that belonged to Montaigne of the '*Annales de France*' of Nicolle Gilles is still extant, and contains 173 annotations of one kind and another.[2]

Of the historical Memoirs of the two brothers Martin and Guillaume Du Bellay he makes much use and he comments on them[3] and compares them, to their disadvantage, with those of "*les anciens de leur sorte,*" le sire de Joinville and Philippe de Comines. The latter he praises for

[1] Essais: *C'est folie de rapporter le vrai et le faux à nostre suffisance.*

[2] It is in the hands of the well known Montaigne scholar M. R. Dezeimeris, who has long promised to publish the results of his examination of these notes, (as is the case with Montaigne's notes on Quintus Curtius; see below). M. Bonnefon, from whom this information comes, says that M. Dezeimeris will show at what date Montaigne read the book, and made these annotations, and states with characteristic inaccuracy that M. Dezeimeris thinks it was in 1554. The volume was not printed till 1562; the date should probably be 1574.

[3] Essais: Liv. II. 10.

the natural simplicity of his language as well as for the authority and gravity of his tone. He would, perhaps, have spoken more at length of Joinville had he known him as we know him; but the first publication of his Memoirs—in 1547—was extremely faulty and falsified. He refers to him as a *"tesmoing tresdigne de foy"*:[1] and borrows three or four stories from him.

He took a few more—six or seven—from *"le bon Froissard"* (all in 1580); one in the very first paragraph of the first Essay. He classed him among the "simple" historians and did not attach much weight to his work.

One of Montaigne's books (now in the Bibliothèque Nationale) was a *'Cronique de Flandres'* with *"Les Memoires de Messire Olivier de la Marche, premier maistre d'hostel de l'archeduc Philippe d'Austriche, comte de Flandres . . . . 1562."* At the end of the volume Montaigne wrote:

"Achevé de lire le 6 mars, 1586 (52)[2] à Montaigne. L'histoire de Flandres est chose commune et mieux

[1] Essais: *Que le goust des biens et des maux*, etc.

[2] This is the date of his own age.

ailleurs. L'introduction ennuieuse de harangues et præfaces. Les Mémoires, c'est un plesant livre et utile, notamment à entendre les loix des combats et joutes, subjet propre à cet autheur et dict en avoir escrit particulièrement. La narration exacte en toutes choses et consciencieuse. Il faict mantion de Philippe de Commines comme Philippe de Commines de luy."[1]

Another of the books Montaigne had in his Library was a history of the Kings and Princes of Poland by Jean Herbart de Fulstin, an ambassador to France. The work was written in the middle of the 16th century, and was translated from Latin and published—a small quarto—in French in 1573. Montaigne read it (as he noted in his copy) in 1586 (the same year as the preceding volume); and he added: *"C'est un abrégé de l'histoire simple et sans ornement."* He made use of it more than once.[2]

He seems to have become interested in the history of Portugal late in life. There is no mention of that country or any of its authors in any edition of the Essays before 1595; but in that edition we

[1] See *Revue d'histoire littéraire de la France*: juillet, 1895.

[2] It has not been observed that the passage about the "duc de Moscovie" (in Liv. I. 48) is transcribed from it word for word (1588).

find him speaking of the bishop Osorius as a *"non mesprisable historien latin de nos siecles;"*[1] and again citing what he says about *"une isle, que les anciens nommaient Dioscoride."*[2] There is a passage in the *'Apologie'* (added in 1595) describing how *"de fresche memoire"* the Portuguese besieging the city of Tamly in the territory of Xiatine[3] were driven away by bees let loose upon them; and at the end of the essay *'Contre la Faineantise'* there are several references (1595) to the Portuguese conquests in India, and to the wars between Portugal and Castile. These are

[1] Essais: *Que le goust des biens et des maux depend,* etc.

[2] Id.: Liv. I. 56. Coste pointed out that in this passage Montaigne makes use of a French translation of Osorius, which was published in 1581. The original work *'De rebus Emmanuelis regis Lusitaniae'* appeared in 1574. The copy that was in Montaigne's Library is now in the Bibliothèque Nationale. It seems therefore that he owned both the original and the translation. Coste shows that he slightly misread his author: the phrase of Osorius: 'Unam tantum uxorem ducant,' and its rendering by his translator: "Ils n'espousent qu'une femme" merely means, one wife at a time.

[3] Neither the commentaries nor the geographical dictionaries throw the least light on this city and territory—whether they were in Spain or in India.

probably derived from two volumes which were in Montaigne's Library.[1]

Montaigne read not only histories but theories about the study of history. He refers to that of Jean Bodin published in 1566 and entitled, '*Methodus ad facilem historiarum cognitionem,*' saying with regard to the uncertainty of historical knowledge: "this topic has been ably treated by Bodin, and according to my conception of it."

His own view of the proper mode of writing history is thus set forth: "When Tacitus says that Vespasian by the favour of the God Serapis gave sight to a blind woman by anointing her eyes with his spittle, and performed I know not what other miracles, he does so by the example and according to the duty of all good historians. They keep a register of important events; among public incidents are popular rumours and opinions. It is

[1] The title of one of these works (belonging to M. Dezeimeris) is '*Historia del descubrimiento y conquista de la India par los Portugueses, compuesta per Hernan Lopez de Castañada . . . .*' *En Anvers,* 1554; of the other (now in the Bordeaux Library) '*Dell unione del regno di Portogallo alla corona di Castiglia istoria del Sig. Jeronimo de Franchi Conestaggio . . . .*' *Genova,* 1585. M. Bonnefon says: "Montaigne *fait allusion* à ces deux ouvrages," which is not the fact.

for them to narrate common beliefs, not to pronounce upon them—that part belongs to theologians and philosophers, the directors of consciences; wherefore very wisely his companion and a great man like him [Quintius Curtius] said: 'Truly I set down more things than I believe; for I can not bear to affirm things whereof I doubt, nor to suppress those things which I have heard.' This is very well said. Let them give us history more as they receive it than as they estimate it."[1]

One finds that Montaigne was always interested, as Pater has remarked,[2] by "the irregular, the unforeseen, the inconsecutive, miracle, accident; it had to him a philosophic import." He thought it a mistake to consider the things we are familiar with as the greatest things of their respective kinds that Nature can produce. "We must judge of things," he says, "with more reverence for the infinite power of God, and more recognition of our ignorance and weakness. How many unlikely matters there are, testified by persons worthy of faith, which if we cannot per-

[1] Essais: Liv. III. 8.

[2] *Gaston de Latour*, p. 128.

suade ourselves to believe we ought at least to leave in suspense!"[1]

It was partly as an historian of marvels that Montaigne was interested by Pliny, but it was "the delicacy and keenness of his judgment," he says, that he chiefly valued. The extent of his indebtedness to him in the direction of suggestion, especially in the earliest essays, has scarcely yet been fully pointed out by Montaigne's commentators; but some thirty-four passages have been noted as derived from him; (eleven of these are in the *'Apologie'*). Montaigne makes more use of Book VII of the Natural History, concerning Man,[2] than of any other part of Pliny's work.

Again, with Herodotus it was not so much his narrations of marvellous things that drew Mon-

[1] Essais: *C'est folie de rapporter le vray et le faux à nostre suffisance.*

[2] Montaigne's regard for Pliny and for some other special authors was echoed fifty years later by Gui Patin—"le medecin le plus gaillard de son temps," Ménage says. He wrote: "L'Histoire de Pline est un des plus beaux livres du monde; c'est pourquoi il a été nommé la 'Bibliothèque des pauvres.' Si l'on y met Aristote avec lui, c'est une bibliothèque presque complète. Si l'on y ajoute Plutarque et Sénèque, toute la famille des bons livres y sera, père et mère, ainé et cadet."

taigne to his pages year in and year out, as chiefly because he found in them that "consideration of the natures and conditions of different men, and of the customs of different nations," which he felt to be "the true subject of moral science." Herodotus became accessible to him by a translation into French made in the middle of the 16th century by Pierre Saliat; a translation that is still eminently readable, and which holds its place well among the many similar works of that time.[1] Montaigne has one quotation from Herodotus in the original. It is in the '*Apologie*' and belongs to 1580, and it has a double interest, because before putting it into his Essay he had placed it among the mottoes on the beams of the ceiling of his Library.

Plutarch and Seneca are associated together in

[1] In one of the passages derived from him Montaigne depicts a strange scene as even stranger than it was in reality. He describes (in the '*Apologie*') the unfortunate 'deputy' sent by the Getae every five years to their god, as meeting his death by being hurled on three javelins held upright each by one man. This would seem to make his 'departure' on the journey to the other world rather a matter of chance. We learn from Rawlinson's translation that many men held each three javelins.

the minds of Montaigne's readers because he more than once refers to them together as if they were equally interesting to him. But his interest in them was not quite of the same character in each case. It was primarily, indeed, because they were both moralists; but the different quality of their moral teaching, or of their expression of it, led Montaigne to lose his close hold of Plutarch after 1580, and to keep connected with Seneca to the end of his life. That he regarded him as a man of high personal character is unquestionable. It seems never to have occurred to him that Tacitus did not take this view; indeed he especially says: "Tacitus and the others (with the exception of the historian Dion) speak very honourably of his life and of his death, and depict him to us as in all ways a very excellent and very virtuous personage"—running counter in this remark to most of the modern students of Tacitus, who think the best that can be said of his opinion of Seneca is that he does not expressly censure him. This remark, together with most of what Montaigne wrote about Seneca, belongs to 1580, before he had read Tacitus as much as he did later.

His analysis of Seneca's style in the essay '*Des*

Livres,' and of his thoughts in the essay, *'De la Physionomie,'* in both instances comparing and contrasting him with Plutarch is excellent and not enthusiastic criticism.

The value of Seneca's writings to Montaigne was not only as a storehouse of admirable quotations, but from their affluence in that general world-wisdom of which Seneca was the mouthpiece.

There is no author whose own words appear so frequently in Montaigne's pages as Cicero. There are in the Essays 136 passages of which the substance is derived from Diogenes Laertius, but being a Greek his words are not once quoted and he is only once mentioned. From Cicero there are 195 quotations and 196 passages are derived from him, and he is mentioned fifty-eight times. The greater part of the 'mentions' and 'derivations' are in 1580, while almost every one of the quotations are in 1595; which clearly suggests that Montaigne read him both in early and late years.

These indications are the more interesting because—and the fact is a curious one—Montaigne

never refers to his constant use of him, as he does in the case of Plutarch and of Seneca, though he cites and refers to him much oftener than to Seneca.

The truth is Montaigne had no high admiration for Cicero except as regards his eloquence, and he did not consider eloquence as a great merit. His judgment had little in common with the fanatical enthusiasm about the great Marcus Tullius which passed from Italy into France in the early part of the 16th century, and was opposed by one voice only, that of Erasmus. But the sarcasms of Erasmus were directed only against the prostrate worshippers; it was they and not their idol that his invariable good sense attacked. Indeed, he himself was full of reverence. He speaks of Cicero as charming him "not only by a certain divine felicity of style, but by the moral purity of his learned spirit. He inspired my soul, and made me a better man."[1]

Montaigne never felt that he was "inspired" by Cicero, nor that he was made "a better man."

[1] Yet, in 1535, Etienne Dolet, because of the criticisms by Erasmus of the great classic, declaimed against him as a monster and a parricide.

He was annoyed by him. He did not like to be invited to fix his attention, nor to hear repeatedly, "'*Or oyez!*' like our heralds." "*Je veux qu'on vienne soudain au point.*"

It shows how the tone about Cicero was changing from what it had been, that Montaigne can say:

"Je suis du jugement commun, que, hors la science, il n'y avoit pas beaucoup d'excellence en son ame: il estoit bon citoyen, d'une nature debonnaire . . . mais de mollesse et de vanité ambitieuse il en avoit, sans mentir, beaucoup."

But he concludes:

"Quant à son eloquence il est du tout hors de comparaison; je croy que jamais homme ne l'egalera."

Montaigne's familiarity with him may be attributed in part to the fact that Cicero is the chief exponent of the philosophical doctrines of his own day and of preceding times. It was from him that Montaigne could learn the opinions of the Stoics, of the Epicureans, of the sect of the Academy, the lineal descendants of Socrates, with whom Montaigne's own opinions had far more kinship than with the followers of Pyrrho, of whom it has been often said, and generally believed, he was at heart one.

Another reason for Montaigne's frequent quotations from Cicero is, perhaps, to be found in the quality of Cicero's diction, far surpassing in fineness of polish the style of Seneca—the only other great Latin moralist who wrote in prose—which made his phrases constantly present themselves to Montaigne's mind as the fittest form for his own thought.

The inchoate state of the French language in the 16th century, which Montaigne himself, with more or less conscious effort, was somewhat moulding, must have made him gladly welcome, when he found them in what may be called his 'maternal' tongue, the Latin, perfect collocations of weighty words, a perfection and a weight impossible to his own language. He says himself: "If you press forward eagerly you often feel that our French tongue weakens and gives way, and in its default Latin comes to the rescue, or, for some, Greek."[1] Ronsard had said:

"[*Notre langue*] *est manque et faut de l'action*
Pour la conduire à sa perfection."[2]

Among Montaigne's various readings, his

[1] Essais: Liv. III. 5.

[2] *Caprice au Seigneur Simon Nicolas.*

liking is evident for the works of Valerius Maximus, Aulus Gellius and Diogenes Laertius—who may all be classed under the general head of 'Compilers,' and his indebtedness to all of them is considerable.

His use of the work of Valerius Maximus was the same as that made by many of the generations between the first and the sixteenth century.[1] It was a storehouse where a large and varied stock of historical anecdotes—excellent illustrative material—lay ready at hand.

Aulus Gellius himself declared that his compilation—the *'Noctes Atticae'*—might be described in the words of Homer, as concerned "with all that takes place of good and ill in the palace." For Montaigne, always interested in "all that had taken place of good and ill in the palace" of the world, the *'Noctes Atticae'* was through life one of his frequent resorts.

The last of these compilers, Diogenes Laertius, is the most important in every sense. His

[1] This work was first printed in 1470. Sixteen editions appeared in the next 20 years. The critical edition published by Aldus in 1502 was probably the one Montaigne used.

stories of the sayings and doings of Greek philosophers and his accounts of their writings furnished Montaigne, it would seem, with most of his information on these subjects. The philosophy of Epicurus, and his life, are treated of by Laertius with particular detail; and almost all Montaigne's knowledge of Epicureanism and admiration for it was derived from him, except what he gained from Cicero and Lucretius. Diogenes is also the principal authority, with the exception of Cicero, regarding the doctrines of the Stoics. From the first Montaigne was interested by him. In the essay *'Des Livres,'* after expressing his pleasure in biography, he says: "I am very sorry that we haven't a dozen Laertius' or that he did not write more at length or with more knowledge; for I am as eager to know the fortune and the life of these great teachers of the world as to know the diversity of their dogmas and conceptions." That his interest in him, or at least his familiarity with him, was even greater at the last than at the first, is indicated by the Table of his Readings.

To pass to writings of a different kind, Montaigne's respect for the Holy Scriptures is

evident, but he shows nothing that can be called personal familiarity with them; only the sort of familiarity that comes of necessity to a good Catholic.[1] He quotes from the Bible some thirty times, frequently in the Latin.

In one of the essays[2] he compares the conditions of belief in minds of medium intelligence with those of great minds, "who by long and religious investigation penetrate to a deeper and more abstruse light in the Scriptures, and perceive the mysterious and divine secret of our ecclesiastical polity." In another essay[3] he speaks with strong disapproval of the prevalent custom of singing the Psalms, set to light, popular airs, at all times and in all places, and to these remarks, which he made in 1580, he added in 1588, speaking of "the holy book of the sacred mysteries of our faith:" "It is not a study for every one; it is to be studied by persons who devote themselves to it, whom God has called to this; . . . . it is not a story to be told (for amusement); it is a story to reverence, to hold in awe, to adore."

[1] Of the 54 sentences inscribed in his Library 19 were from the Bible or ascribed to it.

[2] Liv. I. 54.

[3] Liv. I. 56.

Montaigne was not given to any theological studies after his early work of translation, but it appears that he read the *'De Civitate Dei'* of St. Augustine in his last years, and with interest, since the edition of 1595 contains some eighteen quotations from it. In 1580 he had made one quotation from it, taken, perhaps, from some collection of extracts. Four passages are derived from this book in 1595, one in 1580. He does not give any sign of having known the 'Saint's Confessions.'

In all writing, whether poetical, historical, biographical, philosophical, theological, Montaigne, in his own phrase, liked on the one hand what was perfectly simple, on the other what was truly excellent, that is, either what was simple statement of fact, or what excelled in thought and expression. What lay between had no value to him; and even in the highest reaches of literary art it was truth to nature that charmed him. "Were I of the craft of writers," he says characteristically (in 1595), "I would naturalize art as much as most of them artificialize nature," or, as he first wrote the thought (in 1588), "I would use art as naturally as possible."

But elsewhere, with his customary clearsighted-

ness, he confesses that he himself in his desire to avoid art and artificiality, falls into this fault. This self-judgment is part of an interesting passage about his own style, where he almost seems to be longing, like Shakespeare, and scarcely less surprisingly, for "this man's art and that man's scope." "Whatever I undertake," he says, "I ought to offer a sacrifice to the Graces to win their favour. They completely forsake me; everything is clumsy with me; there is lack of charm and beauty; I do not know how to make things show for what they are worth; my manner adds nothing to the matter; wherefore I need that to be forcible, characteristic and brilliant in itself. When I take up commonplace and lighter subjects it is to follow my own inclination, for I do not enjoy, as the world in general does, a ceremonious and grave wisdom; so I do this to enliven myself, not to enliven my style, which rather asks serious and severe subjects;—at least if I may call 'style' a formless and lawless way of speaking, a jargon of the common people, a progress without definition or division or conclusion, and confused like that of Amafanius and Rabirius. I know neither how to please nor

amuse nor rouse my readers; the best story in the world becomes dry in my hands and fades to nothing."[1]

There is something at once amusing and pathetic in these sincere regrets of the great writer. Again he says: "Perchance I am peculiarly tied (*j'ai quelque obligation particulière*) to expressing only the half, and to expressing that confusedly and incoherently."[2]

Elsewhere he describes the style that he likes: "a language simple and natural, the same on paper as on the lips; a language juicy and vigorous, concise and compressed, not so fastidious and well trimmed as earnest and rough; rather obscure than dull; far removed from affectation; lawless, loose and bold; every bit a part of the whole; not pedant-like nor friar-like, not lawyer-like, but rather soldier-like."[3]

Sainte-Beuve makes a charming comment on this passage emphasizing this last phrase *"pedantesque—fratesque—plaideresque—soldatesque,"* — "How one feels the movement growing more

[1] Essais: Liv. II. 17.
[2] Id.: Liv. III. 9.
[3] Id.: *De l'institution des enfans.*

rapid! and the echo comes in and the multiplication of sound like a waterfall; there is a lyric quality in Montaigne." He goes on: "I once amused myself with noting and bringing together a crowd of passages which display this lyrism in him, what the poets call the 'divine madness.' "[1]— This, as we have seen, is the very quality Montaigne himself believed true poets to possess even when writing in prose.

Montaigne's admirable description of the style he approved, is, one feels, a description of his own style in almost all respects. Two clauses in it give one pause. It is not always that his style is *"court et serré"*—concise and compressed, and it is not, at first appearance, always that *"chaque loppin y face son corps"* that every bit is a part of the whole.

But as regards the first point, the concision of his style, we find Sainte-Beuve speaking of Montaigne's style as *'bref'*; and as regards the second point, it may be asserted that study of the Essays convinces one that in general every bit *is* a part of the whole, and that not many sentences in the earlier editions could be omitted or re-written

[1] *Port Royal*, II. 447, note.

with advantage to the whole. Many of the apparent imperfections of Montaigne's style are due to the intercalations of the posthumous edition; of the work that did not receive *adjustment* from his hand.

If this passage well describes his own style, he has even more exactly described it elsewhere, when speaking of the dialect of the highlands of Guyenne he says: "Above us, among the hills, there is a gascon spoken that I find singularly beautiful; blunt, (*'bref'*—the word Sainte-Beuve employs) significant, and in truth a more manly and military language than any other I know, as sinewy, powerful and pertinent as the French language is graceful, delicate and full."[1] Montaigne's own language was a form of this Gascon.

With this instrument of expression, so "significant," of which the words are thoughts, Montaigne rises from time to time without effort to true eloquence. Take, for example, his description (in the *'Apologie'*) of an army,—the army of his day, or of Roman days, not of ours.

[1] Essais: Liv. II. 17.

"Or ce grand corps, à tant de visages et de mouvemans, qui semble menasser le ciel et la terre, ce furieux monstre à tant de bras et à tant de testes, c'est tousjours l'homme foyble, calamiteux et miserable; ce n'est qu'une formilliere esmeuë et eschaufée,

It nigrum campis agmen:

un souffle de vent contraire, le croassement d'un vol de corbeaux, le faux pas d'un cheval, le passage fortuite d'un aigle, un songe, une voix, un signe, une brouée matiniere, suffisent à le renverser et porter par terre. Donnez luy seulement d'un rayon de soleil par le visage, le voylà fondu et esvanouy: qu'on luy esvante seulement un peu de poussiere aux yeux, comme aux mouches à miel de nostre poëte, voylà toutes nos enseignes, nos legions, et le grand Pompeius mesmes, à leur teste, rompu et fracassé."

A peculiarity of Montaigne's style that has not been often remarked upon is the fact that his vocabulary is sometimes more intelligible to-day to an English than to a French reader; and so also, in a sense, is his grammar. It is said to be easier for an English than for a French ear to follow the construction of his sentences, and for an English than a French mind to admire them. His fluid phrase winds and doubles on itself as Elizabethan English does; it is thought in motion, while the French ideal of excellence in writing is, or has been, that of conversational clearness, vividness and definiteness—the style of Voltaire.

It is unquestionable, as Sainte-Beuve has remarked, that by complete obedience to his own genius Montaigne sometimes tyrannized over the genius of the French language. He was aware of this himself: "Our language succumbs usually," he says, "under a powerful conception."[1]

In the abundance and variety of his metaphors he is as bold as he is brilliant: for instance, where he compares the reformed religion to a medicine too weak to produce its proper effect; and does not merely indicate the relation, but details it, and establishes between the two things in their different spheres a complete similarity of action and result. Sometimes one image suggests another and he does not hesitate to put the two or the three different metaphors side by side; as when speaking of the Romans as sometimes entering into wars

"pour servir de saignée à leur republique et esvanter un peu la chaleur trop vehemente de leur jeunesse, estausser et esclaircir le branchage de ce tige foisonnant en trop de gaillardise."[2]

A still droller mixture is this: "*Toute cette*

[1] Essais: Liv. III. 5.
[2] Id.: Liv. II. 23.

fricassée que je barbouille icy n'est qu'un registre des essais de ma vie."[1] A very audacious figure of speech, but splendid in its audacity, is that where he depicts

"cette brave et genereuse volupté epicurienne, qui fait estat de nourrir mollement en son giron et y faire follatrer la vertu, lui donnant pour ses jouets la honte, les fievres, la pauvreté, la mort et les geénes."[2]

One of the prettiest, perhaps, is this:

"Les abeilles pillotent deça delà les fleurs, mais elles en font aprés le miel, qui est tout leur; ce n'est plus thin ny marjolaine; ainsi les pieces empruntées d'autruy il les transformera et confondra, pour en faire un ouvrage tout sien, à sçavoir, son jugement."[3]

By the side of which may be placed:

"Tout ainsi que les oyseaux vont quelquefois à la queste du grein et le portent au bec sans le taster, pour en faire bechée à leurs petits, ainsi nos pedantes vont pillotant la science dans les livres, et ne la logent qu'au bout de leurs lévres."[4]

The English translators of Montaigne have given a very incorrect image of Montaigne's style,

[1] Essais: Liv. III. 13.
[2] Id.: Liv. II. 11.
[3] Id.: *De l'institution des enfans.*
[4] Id.: *Du Pedantisme.*

and frequently a very incorrect rendering of his thought.[1]

[1] Florio, the first English translator and the one of late most frequently reprinted, has a freedom and fluency that is often called "Elizabethan"; but it is a fatal freedom and fluency for a translator; and it has little of Elizabethan weight and fullness of meaning; his abundance is constantly redundance; he has a tiresome use of clumsy compounds and is fond of useless synonyms, while with Montaigne one word is seldom the 'synonym' of another; each added word is an added thought. To illustrate this fully would take too much space, but a fair example may be found toward the close of the third chapter of the first Book, where in one sentence, that about Diomedon, Florio inserts the words 'ruthless,' 'exemplar,' 'cruelly,' 'bloody,' 'I say,' 'earnestly,' 'revenge'; translates *faict* by 'success' instead of 'action,' making the sense unintelligible; translates *paisable* by 'plausible' (probably a misprint, but one that Mr. Henry Morley as editor, accepts); and translates *descouvrir* (here meaning 'to lay bare') by 'exasperate,' again obscuring the meaning. The character—the quality—of the writing, is thus changed throughout. In the next lines complete darkness is caused by the mistake—misprint again—of 'him' for 'them.' The passage, a part of which was just quoted above in the original, Florio translates as follows: "All this galiemafry which I huddle up here is but a register of my live-essayes, which in regard of the internal health are sufficiently exemplary to take the instruction against the hair." It could hardly be guessed that Montaigne's meaning, paraphrased, is that the reader may profit by the author's example if he reverse it.

The last editor of Florio—Mr. G. B. Ives—makes the severest criticisms of him: *e. g.*: "Florio seems utterly to have missed the sense of this passage, and of very many

One flavour in his style cannot be transferred to another language; he amused himself with puns, as Shakespeare did, and often makes a jest the lighter by his use of them, as when he says of wives, *"qu'elles s'accomodent assez, pourveu qu'elles vous incommodent;"* again, *"C'est ce que disait Antisthenes, qu'il fallait faire provision ou de sens pour entendre, ou de licol pour se pendre."* Or, on the other hand, he emphasizes a serious thought by the echo of the words:

"[La mort] c'est bien le bout, non pourtant le but de la vie."—"L'honneur de la vertu consiste à combattre, non à battre."—"Ma conscience ne falsifie pas un iota: mon inscience, je ne sçay."—"Tel faict des Essais, qui ne sçauroit faire des effects."—"Il faut espandre le grain, non pas le respandre."—"Mille diverses sortes de maux accoureurent à moy à la file: je les eusse plus gaillardement souffers à la foule."—"Je m'instruis mieux par contrarieté que par example, et par fuite que par suite."—"Tout ce qui plaist ne paist pas."—"Tout sapience est insipide qui ne s'accomode à l'insipience commune."—

others in this chapter [Book II. 8]." "This sentence is ridiculously expanded and twisted." "Such interpolations as this, which not only are not suggested by anything in the text, but which have no particular meaning, are puzzling in the extreme." "Florio has outdone himself here in his bewildering confusion of personal pronouns. In the space of two lines we have 'her' referring to *voluptuousnesse,* 'it' twice, and 'her' referring to *virtue*; and four lines below, 'his' and 'her' both referring to virtue."

"Vous diriez souvent qu'il [Tacitus] nous peinct et qu'il nous pinse."

A large proportion of these and similar plays upon words—something like five-sevenths—are found only in the edition of 1595. Not infrequently an earlier thought is later clothed in this form:

In 1588 he said: "C'est honte d'estre ainsin honnoré;" in 1595 it was: "C'est deshonneur d'estre ainsin honnoré."—In 1588 he spoke of the pleasure (in friendship) that one feels "à se perdre et reprendre à secousses;" in 1595 of the pleasure "à se desprendre et reprendre."—"Je suis bien marry que nous n'ayons une douzaine de Laertius, ou qu'il ne soit plus estandu;" (1580): "plus estendu ou plus entendu." (1595).—"Le vice, la mort, la pauvreté, les maladies, sont subjets penibles et qui lassent;" (1588): "sont subjets graves et qui grevent." (1595).—"Je ne trouve rien si bas et si mortel en la vie d'Alexandre que ses fantasies autour de sa deification;" (1588): "autour de son immortalization." (1595).

Even in citations he will turn the phrase in this manner: he thus makes the sage Pherecydes say: "*Aussi ne fay-je pas profession de sçavoir la verité ny d'y atteindre: j'ouvre les choses plus que je ne les descouvre.*"

It is also evident that he liked proverbs, again sharing a taste of Shakespeare's. It is somewhat noteworthy that among the not inconsiderable

number used by Montaigne not one has been pointed out that is also found among Shakespeare's hundred and fifty and odd, nor among the almost two hundred in Don Quixote: it is surprising that he did not catch Spanish proverbs from his father's familiarity with the language, and his mother's Spanish blood. But the three great authors kept in this respect for the most part to the inheritance of each from his race; save that Montaigne occasionally borrowed from the Roman treasury.

Montaigne's use of proverbs differs from that of Shakespeare or Cervantes in being less humorous and more for the sake of vivid illustration of his thought.

"Brider l'asne per la queuë," that is, to trot on without seeing one's road in advance.—"Tant qu'il pensera avoir . . . quelque force de soy jamais l'homme ne recognoistra ce qu'il doit à son maistre; il fera tousjours de ses oeufs poules, comme on dit: il le faut mettre en chemise."—"Il a beau aller à pied, dit-on, qui meine son cheval par le bride."—"C'est prendre d'un sac deux mouldures (*i. e.*, two kinds of grain)."—"La malade n'est pas à plaindre qui a la guarison en sa manche."—"Prendre martre pour renard."—"Je jette la plus souvent la plume au vent, comme on dict, c'est à dire je m'abandonne à la mercy de la fortune."—"Somme, il faut vivre entre les vivants, et laisser le riviere courre sous le pont sans nostre soing."

—"Tailler et coudre un soulier pour qu'un autre le chausse."—"Moy, qui m'en vay, resigneroit facilement à quelqu'un qui vinst ce que j'apprens de prudence pour le commerce du monde: moustarde aprés disner."

"Acheter chat en poche" (or *"en sac"*) is our English "pig in a poke." Ours, too: *"Jetter, comme lon dit, le manche aprés la coignée."—"Dieu donne la froid selon la robe";* Henri Estienne at the same moment (1594) was giving to this saying the form in which Sterne a hundred and fifty years later, translating it, introduced it into English: *"Dieu mesure le froid à la brebis tendue,"—"Le jeu ne vaut pas la chandelle"* is well known to us. Another: *"C'est ce qu'on dict: Le fourgon se moque de la poêle,"*[1] (the poker makes fun of the frying pan) is the equivalent of "The pot called the kettle black," as is Cervantes' *"Dijo la sartén à la caldera, quítate allá, ojinegra."* "The frying-pan said to the kettle, get out, black eyes."

Sometimes we seem to be in at the birth of a proverb. In 1580 he wrote: *"J'ai peur que nous avons les yeux plus grand que le ventre, comme on dict, et le dit on de ceux ausquels l'appetit et la*

[1] Another form of this proverb is, "La pelle se moque du fourgon;" the shovel makes fun of the poker.

faim font plus desirer de viande qu'ils n'en peuvent empocher;" in 1595, *"comme on dict,"* and all that follows is omitted, as if there were no longer need of explanation. A similar illustration, perhaps, though the phrase is not precisely proverbial, is this: *"La noblesse . . . . qui ne vit, comme on dit, que de ses rentes. . . . ."* This *"comme on dit"* possibly implies a novelty in the phrase; as if it were coming into use to describe a new social condition.

Sometimes the phrase opens a window on scenes of the day: *"On est surprins entre la haye et le fossé."* Sometimes it expresses a thought of all times: *"—cette response que les pères ont ordinairement en la bouche: 'Je ne me veux pas despouiller devant que de m'aller coucher.' "—"Celuy qui met la nappe, tombe tousjours des* [*dans les*] *despens."*

The subject of language was naturally one of special interest to Montaigne, and his discussion of the methods for improving it and the proper rule for linguistic innovations is noteworthy. He says: "The handling and use by fine minds gives value to the language not so much by innovations as by enlarging it to more vigorous and various

services, rendering it elastic and pliable; they do not import words into it, but they enrich its own words, giving weight and depth to their signification and their usage; they teach it unaccustomed movements, but prudently and skillfully."[1]

And he goes on, possibly with a thought of the mistakes of the *Pléiade,* to say how greatly many French writers of that time had failed of success from their false aim; "to seize a new word they turn their back on the usual one, which is stronger and more sinewy;" *"pourveu qu'ils se gorgiasent en la nouvelleté, il ne leur chaut de l'efficace."*

If we sum up the qualities shown in the literary opinions of Montaigne we note first his admiration for what is at once natural and vigorous, whether he finds it in the classical poets or in the songs of the people, in the narrations of Caesar or in the conversations of Socrates. Next his delicate discrimination of literary merits; and thirdly, his good sense and fineness of perception regarding the means of perfecting a language without rash innovation.

[1] Essais: Liv. III. 5.

These qualities testify, as Sainte-Beuve has said, to "a mind open and subtle, lusty and delicate, brave and sensitive, a mind unique in kind, which appeared even in those days free and somewhat over-free, and which was inspired and emboldened, without being intoxicated, by direct draughts from antique springs."

LIST OF SOME AUTHORS READ BY MONTAIGNE, WITH HIS JUDGMENTS OF THEM

"Montaigne is really the first modern writer,—the first who assimilated his Greek and Latin. . . . He is also the first modern critic, and his judgments of the writers of antiquity are those of an equal."

Lowell.

"Combien il serait profitable de savoir avec précision pour chacun [de ses livres] quand et comment il le lut!"

Bonnefon.

AUTHORS READ

chiefly before 1580

Ovid
Terence
Martial
Manilius
Horace
Plutarch
Pliny
Aristotle
Caesar
Suetonius
Valerius Maximus
Aulus Gellius

chiefly between 1580 and 1588

Lucretius
Vergil
Juvenal
Tacitus
Lucan
Persius
Propertius
Catullus
Tibullus
Quintus Curtius

chiefly after 1588

Plato
Xenophon
Herodotus
Livy
Diodorus Siculus
Quintilian
St. Augustine

continuously in all years

Seneca
Cicero
Diogenes Laertius

LIST OF SOME AUTHORS READ BY MONTAIGNE, WITH HIS JUDGMENTS OF THEM

I.

AUTHORS READ CHIEFLY BEFORE 1580

ARISTOTLE

"Le prince des dogmatistes." (1580.) "Je ne recognois pas chez Aristotle la plus part de mes mouvements ordinaires." (1588.) "Aristotle, monarque de la doctrine moderne . . . . " (1595). Aristotle is mentioned in the Essays fifty times: twenty-three times in 1580, once in 1582, thirteen times each in 1588 and 1595. Remarks are avowedly derived from him twenty-two times, and unavowedly in more than thirty other passages. Some twenty of these 'derivations' come from the Nicomachean Ethics; a certain number have not been traced; some are derived through Diogenes Laertius, Plutarch, Cicero, Aulus Gellius and Sextus Empiricus; and the rest are taken from the Politics, the Problems, the

Poetics, the Metaphysics, On the Soul, Wonders, and History of Animals.

AULUS GELLIUS

Montaigne derives from him, with small acknowledgment, twenty-one passages: twelve in 1580, six in 1588, three in 1595.

THE BIBLE

"Ce n'est pas en passant, ... qu'il faut manier un estude si serieux et venerable; ce doibt estre un action destinée et rassise, à laquelle on doibt toujours adjouster cette preface de nostre office, *Sursum corda.*" (1580.)

There are thirty-two quotations in all from the Old and New Testaments and the Apocrypha: eighteen in 1580, four in 1588, ten in 1595.

Of these, thirteen are from the Epistles to the Romans, the Philippians, the Colossians and the Corinthians, seven from the latter. There are four from the Psalms, three from the Wisdom of Solomn, three each from Ecclesiastes and Ecclesiasticus (all of 1580), two from the Acts, two from St. Matthew, one from St. Peter, one from Genesis, and a story is taken from Maccabees (1580).

Exactly half are in Latin, half in French.

An odd mistake is made by Montaigne in attributing to St. Paul a sentence taken from St. Augustine. As he takes another sentence from St. Paul apparently through St. Augustine, the mistake very likely arose through the use of a Florilegium.

CAESAR

"Caesar singulièrement me semble meriter qu'on l'estudie, non pour la science de l'histoire seulement, mais pour luy mesme, tant il a de perfection et d'excellence par dessus tous les autres, quoy que Saluste soit du monbre. Certes, je lis cet autheur avec un peu plus de reverence et de respect qu'on ne lit les humains ouvrages; tantost le considerant luy mesme par ses actions et le miracle de sa grandeur, tantost la purité et inimitablé polissure de son langage que a surpassé non seulement tous les historiens, comme dit Cicero, mais à mon advis Cicero mesme et toute la parlerie qui fut onques; avec tant de syncerité en ses jugemens, parlant de ses ennemis mesmes, et tant de verité, que, sauf les fauces couleurs dequoy il veut couvrir sa mauvaise cause et l'ordure de sa pestilente ambition, je pense qu'en cela

seul on y puisse trouver à redire qu'il a esté trop espargnant à parler de soy: car tant de grandes choses ne peuvent pas avoir esté executées par luy, qu'il n'y soit alé beaucoup plus du sien qu'il n'y en met. (1588.)

"Quand je considere la grandeur incomparable de cette ame, j'excuse la victoire de ne s'estre peu depestrer de luy, voire en cette tres-injuste et tres inique cause." (1580.) "J'abomine les enhortemens enragez de cette ame des-reiglée." (1588.)

Caesar's name occurs ninety-two times. The great majority of instances lie naturally in the two Essays regarding him (Liv. II. 33, 34) which are of 1580; but while in 1588 eighteen more mentions of him were added, the increase is only half as much in 1595. He is quoted twice (*De Bello civili*) in 1580; in 1595 he is quoted once (*De Bello gallico*). In 1580 there are eight passages derived from the *De Bello gallico,* and two from the *De Bello civili;* in 1588 and 1595, one each from the *De Bello gallico.*

The edition Montaigne used was that of Plantin, 1570. Beside the MS. page of criticism found in it, mentioned in the preceding paper, Dr. Payen reports that it contains 368 annotations

(M. Bonnefon says more than 600), but that they are such mere brief notes as to possess no interest in themselves. They show with what care he read the book.

HORACE

"Il m'a tousjours semblé qu'en la poësie, Vergile, Lucrece, Catulle et Horace tiennent de bien loing le premier ranq." (1580.)—"Horace ne se contente point d'un superficielle expression, elle le trahiroit: il voit plus cler et plus outre dans la chose: son esprit crochette et furette tout le magazin des mots et des figures pour se representer; et les luy faut outre l'ordinaire, comme sa conception est outre l'ordinaire." (1588.)

The quotations from him are:

	1580	*1588*	*1595*
Satirae, ...	15	5	0
Carmina, ...	16	43	1
Epodi, ...	2	9	0
Epistolae, ...	39	8	3
Ars Poetica, ...	7	0	1
Carmen Seculare, . . .	1	0	0
	—	—	—
	80	65	5

From this list it may be inferred that Montaigne

read the Epistles mainly before 1580; the Odes chiefly between 1580 and 1588.

MANILIUS

Montaigne does not mention Manilius by name, but he quotes from his Astronomica twelve times: nine times in 1580, once in 1588, twice in 1595.

MARTIAL

"Si [Ainsi] n'y a il bon juge . . . . qui n'admire plus sans comparaison l'egale polissure et cette perpetuelle douceur et beauté fleurissante des epigrammes de Catulle que tous les esguillons dequoy Martial esguise la queuë des siens. C'est cette mesme raison que je disoy tantost, comme dit Martial de soy, *minus illi ingenio laborandum fuit, in cujus locum materia successerat.* (1580.) "Il y a un epigramme en Martial qui est de bons, car il y en a chez luy de toutes sortes . . . ." (1580).

Montaigne quotes from the *Epigrammata* twenty-four times in 1580, fourteen in 1588, two in 1595. And once from the *De Spectaculis* in 1588.

OVID

"Le premier goust que j'eus aux livres, il me

vint du plaisir des fables de la *Metamorphose* d'Ovide. Car, environ l'aage de sept ou huit ans, je me desrobois de tout autre plaisir pour les lire," (1580).—"Cette vieille ame poisante ne se laisse plus chatouiller, non seulement à l'Arioste, mais encores au bon Ovide: sa facilité et ses inventions, qui m'ont ravy autresfois, à peine m'entretiennent elles à cette heure." (1580.) See also the last paragraph of the Essay *'Du jeune Caton.'* He is mentioned five times; he is quoted seventy-one times: twenty-seven times in 1580, thirty-nine times in 1588, five times in 1595. *Metamorphoses,* twenty-one; *Tristia,* nineteen; *Amores,* twelve; *Ars Amatoria, Remedia Amoris, Heroides, Epistolae,* each from one to six times.

PLINY THE ELDER

"Est-il rien plus delicat, plus net et plus vif que le jugement de Pline, quand il luy plaist de le mettre en jeu? rien plus esloigné de vanité? je laisse à part l'excellence de son sçavoir, duquel je fay moins de conte." (1580.)

In 1580 there are twenty-two passages derived from him, to these are added in 1582 one, in 1588

five, and in 1595 six. He is quoted once in 1580 and seven times in 1595.

PLUTARCH

Les livres qui m'y servent plus ordinairement (*i. e.*, "par où j'apprens à renger mes humeurs et mes conditions"), c'est Plutarque, depuis qu'il est françois, et Seneque. . . . . Leurs creances sont des meilleures de toute la philosophie, et traictées d'une simple façon et pertinente." (1580.) "En ses comparaisons [those of Plutarch] (qui est la piece plus admirable de ses œuvres et en laquelle à mon advis, il s'est autant pleu); la fidelité et syncerité de ses jugement égale leur profondeur et leur pois." (1580.) "Il est si universel et si plain qu'à toutes occasions, et quelque subjet extravagant que vous ayez pris, il s'ingere à vostre besongne et vous tend un main liberale et inespuisable de richesses et embellissemens." (1588). "Plutarque (qui est de tous les auteurs que je cognoisse celuy qui a mieux meslé l'art à la nature et le jugement à la science) . . . . " (1588).

There are in the Essays three hundred and twenty-three passages derived from Plutarch: one

hundred and eighty-two in 1580; to which one hundred and twenty-three are added in 1588, eighteen in 1595. Of these one hundred and ninety-one are from the Moral Essays; one hundred and thirty-two from the Lives.

It is odd that there is not a single passage derived from his 'Comparisons,' which Montaigne thought the most admirable part of his work. It is also a curious point, in view of the fact of Montaigne's familiarity with Cicero, that there is only one passage derived from the Life of Cicero. There are twenty passages derived from the essay "Which are the most crafty, water or land animals?" but all are included in thirty or forty consecutive pages of the '*Apologie.*'

SUETONIUS

Montaigne makes no comment on Suetonius, but in his essay on Caesar (1580) some twenty passages are derived from him, and elsewhere in 1580 seventeen; there are six in 1588 and two in 1595.

He quotes (without reference) three words from him in 1580.

TERENCE

"Environ l'aage de sept ou huict ans [and in the following years] j'enfilay tout d'un train Vergile en l'*Æneide,* et puis Terence, et puis Plaute, et des comedies italienes, lurré tousjours par la douceur du subject." (1580.) "Quand au bon Terence, la mignardise et les graces du langage latin, je le trouve admirable à representer au vif les mouvemens de l'ame et la condition de nos meurs; [à toute heure, nos actions me rejettent à lui: 1595]; je ne le puis lire si souvent, que je n'y trouve quelque beauté et grace nouvelle." (1580.)

He quotes from the *Adelphi,* the *Eunuchus,* the *Phormio,* the *Heauton-Timoroumenos,* the *Andria,* twenty-four times: ten each in 1580 and 1588, four in 1595.

VALERIUS MAXIMUS

Montaigne mentions the name of Valerius Maximus but once, and then (if it be he who is referred to as Valerius) by mistake. He says (Liv. II. 12) of Cicero: "Valerius dict que sur sa veillesse il commença a desestimer les lettres." No such remark has been found in Valerius Maximus. He mentions him again, not by name, in

speaking of Sextus Pompeius, saying of a certain incident: "Nous l'apprend d'un de ceux de sa compagnie."

He derives from him fourteen passages in 1580, seven in 1588, three in 1595.

II.

AUTHORS READ CHIEFLY BETWEEN 1580 AND 1588

CATULLUS

"—l'egale polissure et cette perpetuelle douceur et beauté fleurissante des epigrammes de Catulle. . . ." (1580.)

He is quoted by Montaigne five times in 1580, once in 1582, twenty-two times in 1588, once in 1595.

CORNELIUS GALLUS

"Gallus parle simplement, par ce qu'il conçoit simplement." (1588.) Montaigne quotes seven times (all in 1588) from an Elegy formerly attributed to Gallus, but now attributed to Maximianus.

JUVENAL

Juvenal's name does not occur in the Essays, but there are forty-nine quotations from him; four in 1580, the rest in 1588.

LUCAN

"J'ayme aussi Lucain et le practique volontiers, non tant pour son stile (car il se laisse trop aller à cette affectation de pointes et subtilités de son temps)[1] mais pour sa valeur propre et verité de ses opinions et jugemens." (1580.)

Montaigne quotes Lucan eleven times in 1580, twenty-seven in 1588, once in 1595.

LUCRETIUS

"—ce grand poëte." (1580.)

There are one hundred and forty-eight quotations from him in the Essays: fifty-five in 1580, one in 1582, ninety-one in 1588, one in 1595. Nine from the first book of the poem, nineteen from the second, fifty-five from the third, thirty from the fourth, and also from the fifth, four from the sixth, one from the ninth.

PERSIUS

The Satires are quoted from twenty-two times. A single quotation only was in the edition of 1580. In the edition of 1595 that was struck out from the place it occupied (in the essay '*Des*

[1] Phrase omitted in 1588.

Livres,') and placed in the essay *'De la Vanité,'* and no other was added. One quotation had been added in 1582; the other twenty all belong to 1588.

PROPERTIUS

There are nineteen quotations from the 'Elegies' in 1588; one in 1595; none in 1580.

QUINTUS CURTIUS

Montaigne does not mention him by name, but he quotes him seven times, all in 1588; and there are nine passages derived from him; one in 1580, six in 1588, and two in 1595.

The distinguished Montaigne scholar, M. R. Dezeimeris, it is said possesses Montaigne's copy of Quintus Curtius, a folio (1545) which contains 168 marginal notes written by Montaigne and a final note summing up his impressions, dated the 3rd of July, 1587. A study of this work, by M. Dezeimeris, was promised to the public ten years and more ago, but has not appeared.

TACITUS

"Je ne sçache point d'autheur qui mesle à un registre public tant de considerations des meurs

et inclinations particulieres. . . . . Cette forme d'histoire est de beaucoup la plus utile. . . . . C'est plustost un jugement que narration d'histoire; il y a plus de preceptes que de contes: ce n'est pas un livre à lire, c'est un livre à estudier et apprendre: il est si plein de sentences qu'il y en a à tort et à droiet; c'est une pepinière de discours ethiques et politiques pour la provision et ornement de qui tiennent rang au maniement du monde. Il plaide tousjours par raisons solides et vigoureuses, d'une façon pointu et subtile, suyvant le style affecté du siecle; ils aymoyent tant à s'enfler qu'où ils ne trouvoyent de la pointe et subtilité aux choses, ils l'empruntoyent des parolles. . . . . Si ses escris rapportent [indiquent] aucune chose de ses conditions, c'estoit un grand personnage, droicturier et courageux, non d'une vertu superstitieuse, mais philosophique et genereuse." (1588.)

Montaigne quotes Tacitus nine times (not with his name); twice in 1580, three times in 1588, four times in 1595.

He derives from him forty-one passages, seven of them avowedly, the others not so; eight each in 1580 and 1595, twenty-five in 1588.

An examination of the eight in 1580 shows that three are from the *'De Oratoribus,'* one from the Life of Agricola; the others from the Annals, but of a somewhat peculiar character; one is a notice of a custom (about thumbs) among barbaric kings, a custom quite of a kind to be inserted in some collection of miscellaneous facts, one or more of which it is highly probable Montaigne made use of; the other three passages all regard Seneca and Lucan, and would be very likely to be found in memoirs of them.[1] There is therefore no positive evidence that Montaigne had read the Annals before 1580. That he had not, is made probable by the fact that in his Third Book, ch. 8 (1588), he says: "Je viens de courre d'un fil l'histoire de Tacitus . . . . et l'ay faict à la suasion d'un gentilhomme que la France estime beaucoup;" and by another fact, which is, that of the twenty-five passages in 1588 three only are from the History proper, one from the Life of Agricola, and all the rest from the Annals, and

[1] There should always be remembered, what Montaigne says in the essay *'De la Physionomie'*: "Tel allegue Platon et Homere qui ne les veid onques; et moy, ay prins des lieux [des citations] assez ailleurs qu'en leur source."

of the eight 'derivations' in 1595 all are from the Annals.

VERGIL

"—le maistre du cœur [du choeur]." (1580.) —"Il m'a tousjours semblé qu'en la poësie, Vergile, Lucrece, Catulle et Horace tiennent de bien loing le premier ranq; et notamment Vergile en ses *Georgiques,* que j'estime la plus plein et accompli ouvrage de la poësie: à la comparaison duquel on peut reconnoistre aysément qu'il a des endroicts de l'*Æneide* ausquels l'autheur eust donné encore quelque tour de pigne, s'il en eust eu loisir (1580) et le cinquiesme livre en l'*Æneide* me semble le plus parfaict." (1588.)

There are one hundred and fifteen quotations from Vergil; twenty-six in 1580, eighty-three in 1588, six in 1595; twenty-five of these are from the Georgics (seven, 1580; eighteen, 1588); eighty-three from the Aeneid; one only each from the first and the ninth books; the others very evenly divided among the other books; seven or eight to each; there are fourteen from the fourth book; the fifth book, Montaigne's favorite, has no superiority in quotation.

From the Eclogues there are seven quotations (three, 1580; four, 1588).

III.

AUTHORS READ CHIEFLY AFTER 1588

DIODORUS SICULUS

He is mentioned only once: "Cicero et Diodorus disent . . . ." (1595); but seventeen passages are derived from him; in 1580 and 1588 two each; in 1595, thirteen.

HERODOTUS

Montaigne mentions him eight times, but makes no comment on his work.

There are fifty-three passages derived from him; nine in 1580, one in 1582, five in 1588, thirty-eight in 1595.

Of these passages forty-two are taken from the first four Books of Herodotus; eleven from the last four.

LIVY

"J'ay leu en Tite Live cent choses que tel n'y a pas leu. Plutarque y en a leu cent, outre ce que j'y ay sceu lire." (1595.)

He quotes him thirty-eight times; all, without

exception, in 1595. Twenty-six passages are derived from him: twenty-one in 1595, three in 1588, two in 1580.

PLATO

"La licence du temps m'excusera elle de cette sacrilege audace, d'estimer . . . trainans les dialogismes de Platon mesme, estouffans par trop sa matiere, et de plaindre le temps que met à ces longues interlocutions, vaines et preparatoires, un homme qui avoit tant de meilleures choses à dire? Mon ignorance m'excusera mieux sur ce que je ne voy rien en la beauté de son langage." (1595.)

In 1580 Montaigne mentions him forty-seven times; in 1588, thirteen times; in 1595, one hundred and sixteen times. In 1580 he derives from him eleven passages; in 1588, seven; in 1595, one hundred and two.

These passages come from the following dialogues: Laws, thirty-two; Republic, twenty-three; Timaeus, eighteen; Georgias, seven; Phaedo and Theaetetus, each six; Phaedrus and Menon, each three; the Apology, Laches, Hippitas, Politics, Ion, the Symposium, the 1st and

2nd Alcibiades, each two; Protagoras, Critias, Rivals, Axiochus, each one; Letter to Archytas and Letter to Perdiccas, each one.

QUINTILIAN

"— un bien judicieux auteur." (1595.)

He is quoted twelve times, all in 1595; and four passages are derived from him, three in 1595, one in 1580.

XENOPHON

"Un gentilhomme de marque, tres grand homme de guerre et de paix." (1570.)

Lettre à M. de Lansac.

"Si les gestes de Xenophon et de Caesar n'eussent de bien loing surpassé leur eloquence, je ne croy pas qu'ils les eussent jamais escris: ils ont cherché à recommander non leur dire, mais leur faire." (1580.)

In speaking of Cyrus, Montaigne remarks: "Et son historien et luy, entre leurs grandes qualitez, ont semé par tout le cours de leur vie un singulier soin et reverence à la religion." (1595.)

In speaking of the unreasonable 'privileges' of war opposed to justice he says: "Je m'estonne de l'estendue que Xenophon leur donne, et par

les propos, et par divers exploicts de son parfaiet empereur: autheur de marveilleux poids en telles choses, comme grand capitaine et philosophe des premiers disciples de Socrates: et ne consens pas à la mesure de son dispense en tout et par tout." (1595.)

There are eight passages derived from him in 1580, eight in 1588, twenty-one in 1595—thirty-seven in all. Twenty of these are from the *'Cyropaedia'* (chiefly in 1595); ten from the *Memorabilia* (1588-1595); three from the *Anabasis* (1595); one each from the *Hieron* and *Economica* (1580); one each from the *Symposium* and *Hellenica* (1588).

IV.

AUTHORS READ CONTINUOUSLY IN ALL YEARS

CICERO

"A confesser hardiment la verité . . . . sa façon d'escrire me semble lasche et ennuyeuse, . . car ses prefaces, digressions, definitions, partitions, etymologies consumment la plus part de son ouvrage; ce qu'il y a de vif et de mouelle est estouffé par la longueur de ses apprets. Si j'ay

employé une heure à le lire, qui est beaucoup pour moy, et que je r'amentoive ce que j'en ay tiré de suc et de substance, la plus part du temps je n'y treuve que du vent: car il n'est pas encore venu aux argumens qui servent à son propos, et aux raisons qui touchent proprement le neud que je cherche." (1580.)

Cicero is mentioned by Montaigne thirty-one times in 1580, three in 1588, twenty-four in 1595. He is quoted three times in 1580, twice in 1588, one hundred and eighty-nine times in 1595. In 1580 there are thirty-three passages derived from him; in 1588, eighteen; in 1595, fifty-five. The quotations are taken as follows:

Tusculanae Quaestiones, fifty-eight.

De Natura Deorum, twenty-eight.

De Finibus, twenty-seven.

De Officiis, twenty-five.

Academica, eighteen (fifteen of them from Lib. II.).

De Divinatione, eighteen.

De Senectute and *Paradoxa Stoicorum,* six each.

De Amicitia, three.

Timaeus, two.

Epistolae ad Familiares, Pro Ligario, Fragmenta Poematum, one each.

DIOGENES LAERTIUS

"Je suis bien-marry que nous n'ayons une douzaine de Laertius, ou qu'il ne soit plus estandu (1580) ou plus entendu: car je suis pareillment curieux de cognoistre les fortunes et la vie de ces grands precepteurs du monde, comme de cognoistre la diversité de leurs dogmes et fantasies." (1595.)

He is mentioned twice, but not once quoted. There are eighteen passages derived from him in 1580, nine in 1588, one hundred and nine in 1595.

SENECA

"Les epistres de Seneque est la plus belle partie de ses ecrits et la plus profitable." (1580.)

Seneca is mentioned seven times in 1580, seventeen times in 1588, nine in 1595. He is quoted seven times in 1580, twice in 1588, eighty-five times in 1595. In 1580 thirty-five passages are derived from him, thirteen in 1588, fourteen in 1595.

Of the quotations, eighty-two are from the *Epistolae;* two each from the *De Providentia,* the *Agamemnon,* the *Thebais,* the *Œdipus;* one each from the *De Ira, Consolatio ad Polybium, De Beneficiis, Hyppolitus, Troades, Hercules Furens, Thyestes.*

Of the 'derivations' fifty-four are from the *Epistolae;* two each from the *De Clementiâ,* the *De Tranquillitate,* the *De Beneficiis, Quaestionum Naturalium, De Ira;* one each from the *Consolatio ad Marciam,* the *Consolatio ad Helviam,* the *De Constantia Sapientis.*

The quotations and derivations taken together represent eleven out of Seneca's fourteen works in prose, and seven out of his ten tragedies.

Beside the fifty authors of whom mention is made in this list, or in the preceding paper, one hundred and twenty-five others are either mentioned, or quoted or made use of in the Essays.

The valuable collection of extracts from Greek writers made by Stobaeus furnished Montaigne with some material. And also that of two monks printed at the end of some editions of Stobaeus.

He had also in his Library a *'Florilegium*

diversorum epigrammatum in septem libros' of 1531; and he used a collection of *'Poetae gnomici'* edited by Hertel in 1561 and 1569; and also the *'Sententiae'* of Publius Syrus, of which Erasmus published an edition in 1516, and of which there was another in 1560.

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